

Bay 12 Games Forum

Dwarf Fortress => DF Community Games & Stories => Topic started by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 01, 2008, 12:44:29 pm

Title: **Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 01, 2008, 12:44:29 pm**

The king was listless. The wars had been going well enough in truth, but despite this the people were sullen and unhappy, displeased with the outcomes of recent events. Had they known the full extent of losses suffered in centuries prior they might appreciate their current position. But even the current mountain-home was not more than fifty years old, and engravings and legends from previous years were hard to come by. The mountains and hills were still perilous, despite all their efforts.

It's not that his people were ungrateful, nor unhappy outright, but rather suffered from a malaise of spirit that the king feared only miraculous successes could dispel. That, or perhaps something more basic. A rekindling of the dwarven spirit of old, a rejuvenation by feeling and hearing and seeing past greatness. The king had sent off many adventurers in the past, seeking for the lost artifacts of old, or searching for the fabled hidden treasure city. Only one such group that he had sent contained a true historian, a scholar from the School of the Founders no less, one versed in oral history as well as written, that history which had survived the shattering of the world and brutal wars which followed.

He'd sent for that historian personally, provided him with all the supplies that he could possibly need, and seen fit to assign six of his own personal Ragnaachi, elite-warrior bodyguards, to accompany him. The task he'd been given was simple. Revisit the shattered fortressess of past antiquity. Collect all the histories available, by engraving or tome or any other method available. The king has fretted much as they were gone first one year, then five, then ten with little news for good or ill. Then one surprising winter day the historian had returned. Only one of his original guards remained, though he had gained a few others somehow on the way. And all he had with him was naught but a backpack and a few trinkets. No artifacts, no mighty weapons. Still, when the king met with him his eyes gleamed and a wide smile graced his worn face.

The king simply asked:"Have you found what I sent you for?"

Those in attendance and in-waiting, those guards and soldiers with the king knew nothing of the quest, and the king had long since decided it should remain so. Wearily the historian nodded, but his eyes spoke of something more, and the king saw that and knew. He had found a great treasure indeed. Wealth beyond imagining.

Late that night, when the fortress was quieter, the king paid a visit to his subject, the aged soldier standing guard in front of his door nodding briefly as he passed. The historian had been settled in one of the royal rooms, as befitted a scholar and philosopher, though they commonly ignored such trappings. His worn and threadbare clothes had been replaced with fresh, clean clothes and a fine, jewel studded flask was in the process of being emptied as the king entered.

The king waited as the flask was drained. One simply did not interrupt a drinking dwarf, not in polite society, not even if their socks were on fire. The weary and travel-worn historian bowed briefly to his king and then gestured over to his table, casting aside the pouch of gold, the crystal glass trinkets that a previous owner now deceased had left and cleared a spot for his sacred treasure. The king scarcely dared to breathe as the historian brought out not one, but several tomes, faded and worn, old by any account and worn, damaged and dirty almost beyond use. These he gently laid on a piece of midnight blue silk he had laid on the table. He opened one gently for the king to inspect, translating to him from the old tounge.

The king had been pleased, and immediately commissioned him to copy them as well as to outline and flesh out the history of their race. The historian was happy to comply, and all his time and energy went into his work. The first page of the historian's book lay on the kings table as he paced his room. More would shortly follow, he knew, and soon, the history would be properly bound. It remained uncertain that it would help lift his people's spirits, and buoy them and strengthen them for the challenges ahead, but short of emptying the homes of his people and focusing their entire nation on a war they might lose, but which could improve their morale should they win, the book seemed to be the best choice.

The king looked at the page again, picking it up and pacing his room as he read it. And he smiled.

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Smaksmo Udo, commonly known as the Universes of Soul.

The early wars and conquests of the Big Knife tribe of dwarves in Smaksmo Udo are reasonably well documented. But in all the histories of the dwarves the rise of the Fahlstrom clan of the Big Knife tribe stands, perhaps, as the most significant event in the years after the first millenium of recorded history and birth of the nations. The interesting fact of the matter is that the Fahlstrom clan can be traced easily to a single individual, one Atun Fahlstrom, apparently a resident of Kilrudmorul, whose location remains a mystery that has been lost to the ages. Atun serves as an even more interesting example of dwarfhood in that, unlike much of our perhaps more primitive ancestral heros he was, above all, an educated dwarf. Atun was a highly trained example of a siege engineer, one profession whose adherents are typically well-versed in mathematics, physics, and commonly the aerodynamics of flying objects. It is a testament to his skill, that according to legend, he single-handedly broke a goblin siege by crushing the goblin king under a boulder. Whether this happened as reputed is a matter of dispute among other historians but the author of this work feels that this remains more or less the truth. It was not, however, his prowess as an engineer that brought him his most fame, nor his reputed martial skill obtained in the military thereafter, though he was awarded the rank of Champion. It was his other attributes that inspired this founder of the strongest clan in history to break with tradition and to foster the orphans of the wars, that brought him the most notariety. The original four children he adopted (not sired) were all reputedly gifted and he took them in and taught them. The eldest of the four original Fahlstrom clan was Paulus, nine days his younger was Tony, a little more than a year younger was Scott, or Parenglaive and the youngest of the four was Tarin. This treatise will contain much of their original writings so that the reader may see for himself the struggles of the early clan. I, the author of this treatise, will interject other information as I see fit to fill in details that may have been omitted.

Be it known, we are dwarves once of the Big Knife tribe. We are few in word, for, in this world, words are easily stolen by the Vagushnum, the killing wind. But here, that which is carved in stone remains. And we are carved from the very bones of the mountains themselves.

Uril Sazirkatten
Historian of the Royal family of the Washed Constructs

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 01, 2008, 12:57:28 pm**

(OOC)

Ok, I've been dying to create this story for some time now. The histories of the dwarves of Smaksmo Udo, the Universes of Soul.

This will be a Community fortress situation and you may have a hand in the forging of the Fahlstrom clan as well. Of the original 7 dwarves only one will be claimed by myself. The others may be claimed as desired. Please list name, gender (if preferred), weapon preference (this is a goblin war-fare based thread) and one or two other non-military profession preferences.

I'd like to start with two Miners, at least one Mason and one Farmer. Which leaves one or two open for whatever. We won't need engravers to begin with. Though if you want to become one eventually that's fine.

Also as a note, this will be a hardcore campaign thread. I will not be 'altering' reality (Dwarf companion) or even save scumming. If you die, you die. If my character dies, he dies. If you get a splinter that gets infected and no one wants to tend you, you may die. ;) That

being said, I've had plenty of experience caring for dwarves and keeping them healthy. I may consider some mods at a future date, but likely only to make the game harder to survive, not easier.

The Big Knife clan in the early history will be portrayed as somewhat barbarian-like in their lifestyle. This may be due to the fact that all of the dwarven cities of the nation with one or two exceptions are in a freezing biome, and frequently next to glaciers or tundras. Keep in mind we are (or will be soon) at full scale war with the goblins. When I've exhausted the future possibilities for a fortress (read: no longer a challenge) we'll restart. I intend almost every starting location to be in or at or near an enemy stronghold, hence the emphasis on weapon skills.

So let's

Strike the Earth

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **July 01, 2008, 01:33:09 pm**

Aardvark
Weapons and armorsmith
Axedwarf

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **July 01, 2008, 04:37:57 pm**

Name:Fre

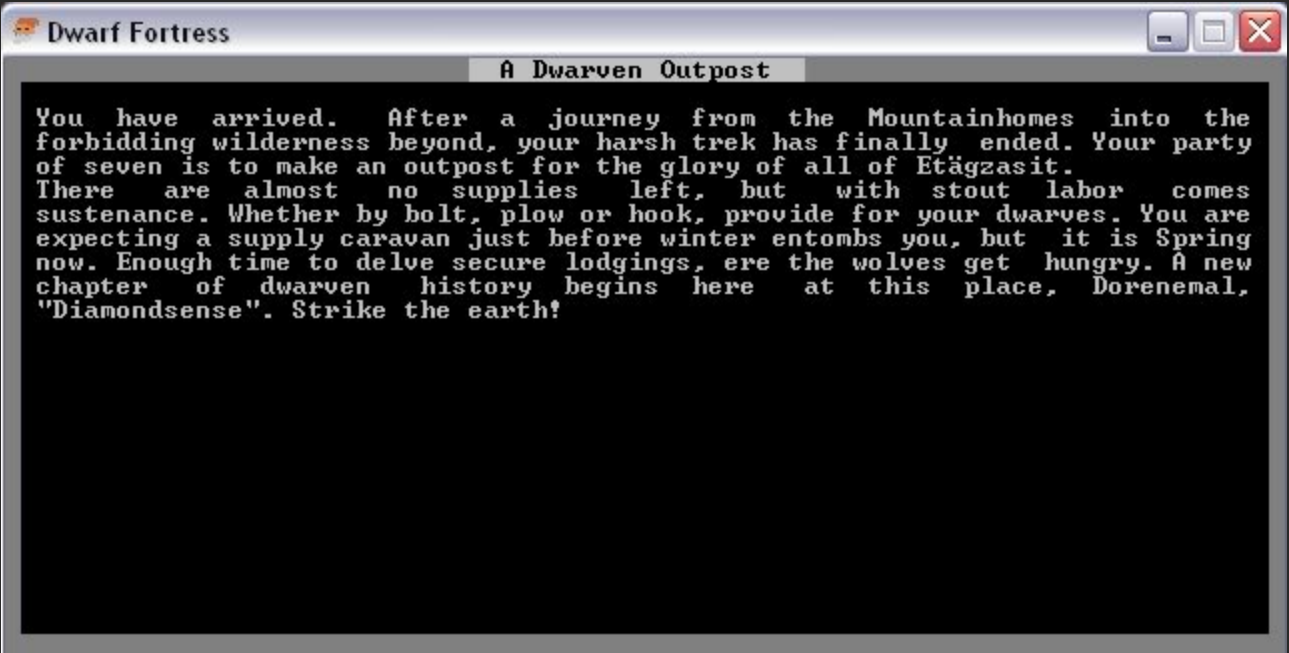
Gender: Preferably male, but I'm not adamant about that.

Professions:
Siege Engineer
Mechanic

Weapons preference:
Crossbow, though prefers to be behind a ballista.
Enjoys experimenting with new instruments of destruction, such as booze bombs.

Or, if you're embarking with Atun Fahlstrom, I'll take a farmer/cook. Same name and weapons.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 01, 2008, 04:52:39 pm**



Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 01, 2008, 06:47:02 pm**

1st of Granite, 1051

The King's advisor decided to continue his vendetta against the memory of our foster father Atun. He has made it his goal apparently to rid himself of all of us in his efforts to wipe clean the slate. My brothers and I will not go quietly. As the first to reach adult-hood I was awarded the dubious honor of being drafted by the military to lead an expedition to reclaim a region between our two major cities. Education among our people isn't common, and since Atun taught us all to read, write and think for ourselves apparently I'm suitable to become the organizer of this band. Sazirgeb lies to our south, haven of our people. Lalkol lies to the north, bordered by hard stone, and unforgiving and accursed tundra. I had hoped to be sent further south.

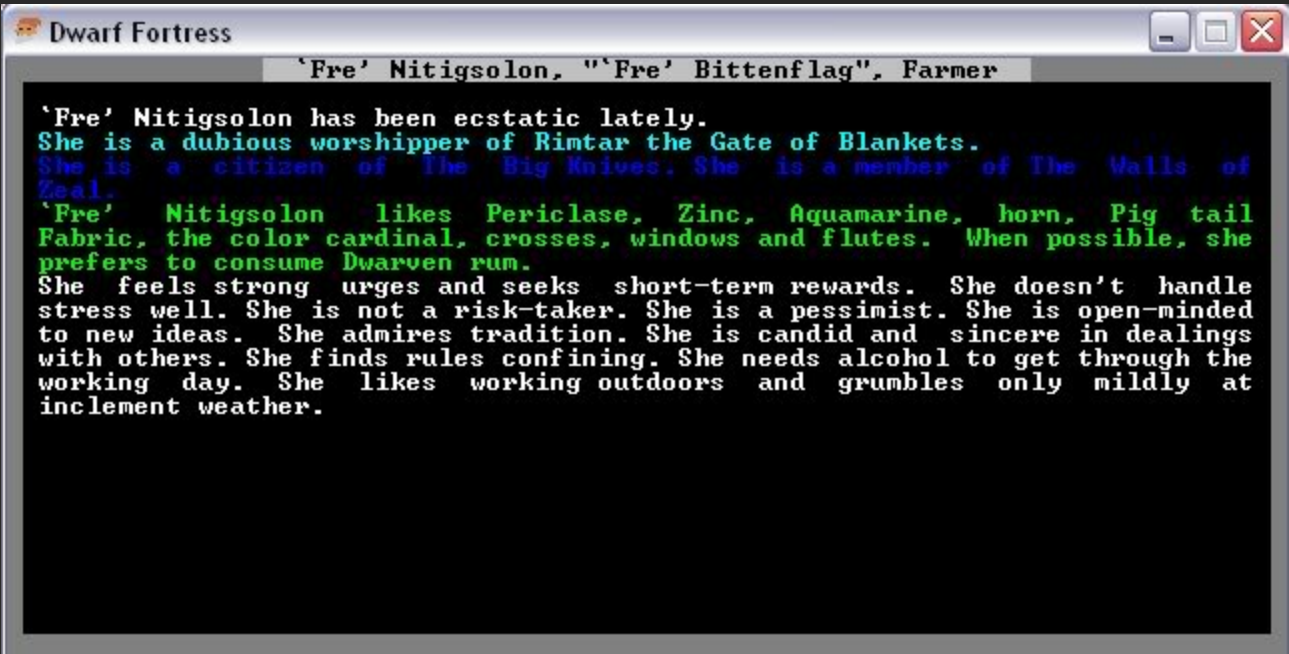
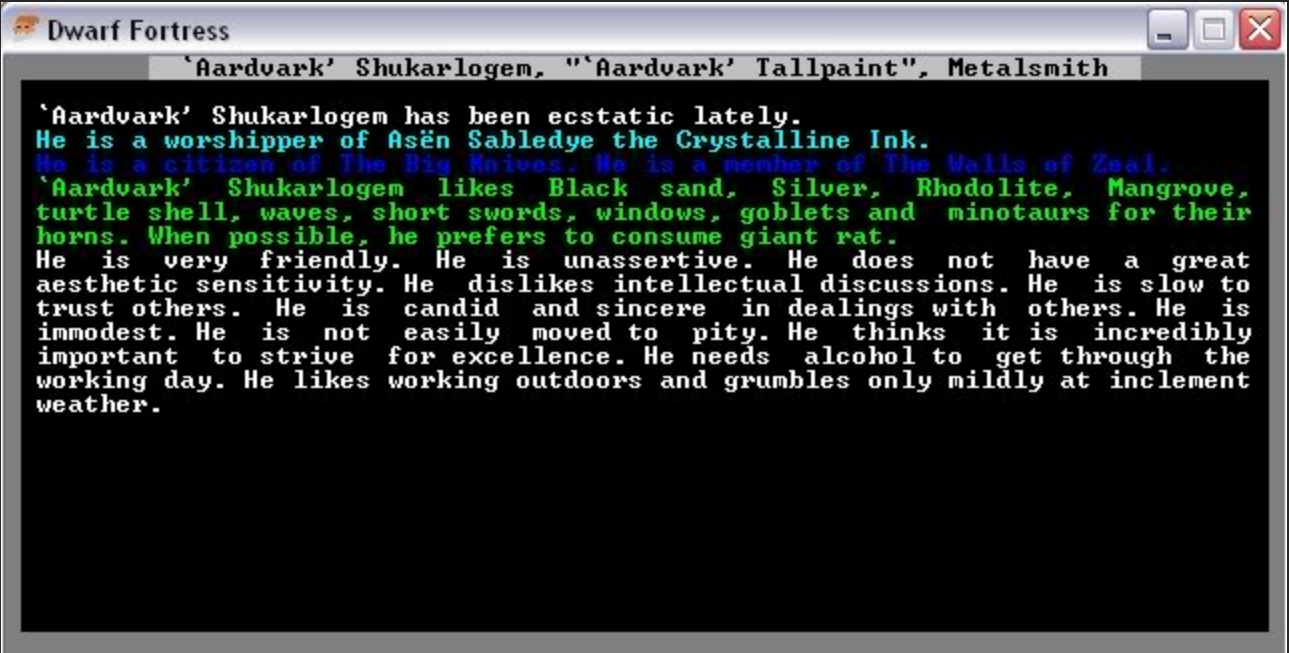
From what the others tell me apparently a group of settlers thought this would make a good place to establish a mining operation. Apparently a small outpost of goblins thought the same. The miners never even tried to establish an outpost as soon as the saw the

obsidian walls of two forts overlooking where they hoped to go. I find it strange. We haven't had a major goblin war in nearly a century or so now. The last war had been costly on both sides. But how in the hard frozen north they thought they could establish a military post in decidedly our borders is beyond my thinking. I do not understand the goblins in that.

It is early spring here now. The blizzards haven't even died down. We're approaching the forts from the back, over the hills instead of up from the valleys. It should be easier to reach them from this direction. Our, or should I say my, orders are to eliminate the goblins and establish a settlement here so this section of our mountain range can remain uncontested. From the old records I noticed that most of this region has ample granite, which should serve us well. Several others from one of my fathers old units were assigned to accompany us. I suspect the worm, old Agna, is hoping, or even counting on us dying up here. I write this as I ride in the wagon next to Fre. Thank goodness she can drive the thing with a crossbow in her lap. I wonder if she's ever shot herself. I'm having to tuck the inkwell into my skivvies to keep it from freezing over, but with all the jostling I'm afraid I may wind up having blacker clothes than I had originally purchased.

Aardvark is up ahead clearing the trail somewhat for the heavier wagon, as is Ragnar. I feel sorry if any goblin supprises those two. I doubt they'd tread it any different then the stunted trees and saplings they're removing. Pine though, should make for a suitable wood supply, though there aren't much of them. Mafol and Medtob are slogging behind us along with Steele. Stoneworkers those three, and should be useful once we get to our destination. Looks like we're clearing the crest line now.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 01, 2008, 06:55:36 pm**



(OOC)

Sorry Fre, forgot to look at gender when I gave you your skills. Feel free to play your character as male anyways.

Just so you two know your current skill sets are
Aardvark: Weaponsmith 2, Armorsmith 2, Axedwarf 4, Armoruser 2
Fre: Grower 2, Cook 2, Armoruser 2, Marksdwarf 4

I'm a combat mechanic.

Still have room for one more ex military (Kib F axedwarf/woodcutter/carpenter)
3 civilians (two miners and a mason)

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **DarkMagnus** on **July 01, 2008, 08:32:54 pm**

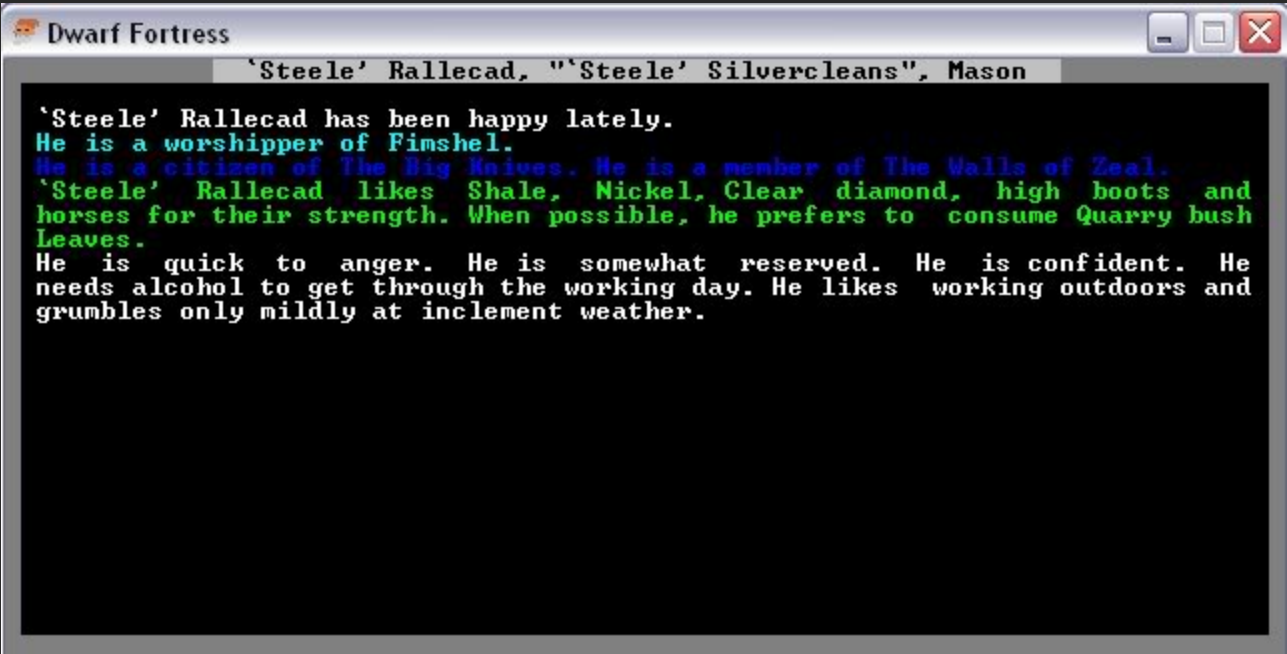
Ragnar
Male
Woodcutter/Axedwarf/Carpenter
Axe, obviously.

Strike the friggin' earth.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Skanky** on **July 01, 2008, 09:34:59 pm**

Name: Steele
Gender: Either
Weapon: Crossbow
Other profession: Mason

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 02, 2008, 11:50:39 am**



(OOC)

Again, apologies Ragnar for the gender bender. That dwarf was already female, though if you'd prefer feel free to rp him/her whichever gender you choose. Don't take this personally ... but you're fond of Fairies! Very undwarflike if you ask me. ;)

Two miners left (1 M 1F)

Modifications to previous posts have been done. Moving on.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 02, 2008, 12:22:42 pm**

1st of Granite, 1051. Later that day.

This place seems eerily deserted. Sure, this place is still locked in the icy grip of winter. For that matter I'm not sure if the warm caress of summer is even felt in this place. Sure, we have cliffs several hundred feet high on almost all sides. Oh, yeah, and the blizzard that just picked up which makes it roughly cold enough to freeze the balls off of a titan. Considering I hear they don't wear clothing I suppose that saying might just hold true.

Still, we've managed to get the wagon this far, and even were able to bring it right up and park it on the roof of one of the goblin fortresses, and still not a sign of the beastly little things. With any luck they'll all have frozen solid, or fallen off the cliff. One can only hope. I called a meeting to discuss a few things. I suppose it went well enough. We have three seasoned veterans. Hopefully they'd be able to check things out while the rest of us dug in as it were. Though with the ready made fort it might simply be easier to just take it over. Plans were beginning to form. Looking at this little place I sensed how much potential it had. If we could survive and manage to carve a way to established trade routes.

Gathering the group together I began...

"Ok, listen up everyone. We need to get out of this weather and have a dry place to rest before evening. We haven't seen any goblins, but that doesn't mean they're not there. Aardvark, Fre and Ragnar would you three mind checking out the lower floors of this building to make sure there aren't any little green-skinned vermin running around?

If we take over this building I think we can tailor it to suit our purposes well enough. I'd like to try and find a water source if possible but we also need to ensure that any supplies and reinforcements get in."

It all started well enough. Things rapidly went downhill from there.

Aardvark spoke out then, with a slight cough and clearing of his throat first, as though he were hesitant to mention something.

"Um, Paulus. I'm afraid my axe shattered on our way in. The pieces got lost in the snow, but I've got the haft still if you need one of those. In a pinch I could use it to stave some heads in."

A sinking feeling began in my stomach. Must have been a defect in the metal. I've never seen a good steel blade break like that. We had been equipped specially for this assignment. All of our gear had been set aside in a separate room, ready for us when we dropped by the quartermasters. I had taken their level of preparation as a compliment.

Fre piped in then as well.

"Ach, sure. at least you got both parts to begin with though. They gave me a crossbow sure enough. But they didn't provide any string, nor bolts to go with it. Nor did they give me time to get some when we left."

Now I began to see why our gear had been set aside to begin with. It was normal for the departing groups to select their gear from the racks or piles. I wondered then just how far the King's advisor Agna had gone to ensure that we would be unsuccessful.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 02, 2008, 01:09:21 pm**

"Well, if that's the way it's got to be. So be it. Ragnar if you would lead the way, let's clear out some space a floor down. Get ourselves and our gear in from this storm before our ale freezes."

We went to work with a will. There was no other choice. We were of the Big Knife tribe. We've lived in the north all our lives. You moved, or you died. It was a simple as that.

Entering the goblin fort was like stepping into a whole different world. The stairs were too small, and the doorways too narrow. And by the bones of the earth did goblins like obsidian. It must have taken a small army to get this place erected and to get all the supplies moved. Whether that small army was still here was my concern. The elevation of this place was very erratic. Huge cliffs rose and fell on either side. But the three forts that I had seen coming in, and yes there were three, though the miners had only reported two, were somewhat isolated from each other. Definitely to our advantage. We had seen no goblins moving, which was also to our advantage. If they didn't know we were here we might be able to get a good foothold before they knew it.

It hadn't been an hour when Ragnar returned, grinning widely, covered in blood and gore and wiping it from his axe blade with what appeared to be a cave spider silk sock. One that was too narrow to belong to a dwarf. We had barely begun clearing one floor down from the exposed roof.

His grin was infectious and I couldn't help grinning in return.

"D'ya have fun then? I hope none of that is yours."

"This? Bah, only one of them managed to get in a good hit. Clocked me on the noggin' too. Drunk blighter. I fixed 'em good though. Left 'em in five pieces on the floor. Hit me in the head will he?"

Ragnar called over to Aardvark "Oi, mate. Was a nasty 'un down there with a huge sword. Don't know how he carried it. He sure didn't know how to use it. It's yours if you want in on the fun. Let's go clear that other building there! Only three little buggers in this one. I'm just getting warmed up. "

As Aardvark went running down to retrieve the newly acquired weapon Ragnar reported quickly.

"Building should be clear. Only three gobbos like I said. Two were drunk. There were some trinkets and jink lyin' around and a mountain of food and drink. But it was nasty goblin stuff. Watery piss and half rotten meat or worse. Aardvark and I can scout around and see what else we find. This storm might help us well. If we can clear out a good portion of the vermin we might just have the others cowering in their forts in terror. If they ever bother checking on the other buildings."

I decided to inspect the building real quick while the others worked. I wanted to see what we had to work with. The place seemed overly large to just house three goblins and the supplies, though unusable for dwarf-kind, to be sure, were equally perplexing. The building was huge! Five floors if you counted the windswept but fortifiable roof. Three floors down I found the first signs of life. Or rather death. Smallish goblin that obviously had been drinking. Three empty skins littered the room. Looking at the body and gauging the size of the blow and blood the goblin had originally been standing in the center of the room when Ragnar entered. I could see it in my mind how it happened. This one was easy.

Ragnar turned the corner to see a weasely little goblin taking a swig. He charged, his axe leading the way. The goblin may have had time to gasp before Ragnar's axe caved in it's chest, shattering bone, crushing lungs and propelling the creature to the far end of the room to strike the wall and collapse. I doubt it had lived for more than a few seconds after that.

A second room on the same floor also showed sign of battle, this one more complex. It appears that Ragnar had charged this one too, though it was better armored and must have been the one carrying the sword and shield. He had all but tackled it into the corner, there was an abundance of scuff marks there before they rolled to the center of the room. Ragnar must have gained the advantage there. A severed right leg lay in an arc on the side where it must have flown. The goblin appeared to have tried to crawl away but didn't make it very far. It's severed head lay near the rest of the corpse. Ragnar certainly was an effective soldier.

The third body was on the lowest floor. It must have been the drunk that had hit him. Blood had sprayed everywhere and lay pooling beneath the pieces.

It had been quick. The goblins didn't appear to have been expecting it in the least. Hopefully the two veterans would fare equally well in the other building. They had the groups only two weapons now.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 02, 2008, 03:18:31 pm**

1st Granite, 1051, Evening

The pair returned shortly before nightfall. Or what I assumed would be nightfall. One could never tell with the blizzard picking up in strength. I'd have to ensure that we all remained indoors during inclement weather. The wind coming up from the hills was at times strong enough to knock a dwarf down if he wasn't careful, and with the cliffs so near I didn't want anyone falling off.

Both looked cheerful, though it was apparent that Ragnar had gotten the better of Aardvark this time. Their voices drifted in once they got close enough.

"Ach, sure. You got the kill on the second, but only because I was pinning him. The first was mine."

Ragnar countered,"Looked more like he was pinning ye. On the first though I tell ye, I clearly took off his head. The kill was mine. You can't say the sword through his chest necessarily killed him. He could have been alive still. Certainly looked like he was still moving."

"Hmpf. Twitchin' was more like it. And I was pinning the other from underneath him. I had him by the arms, the wretch, and he was talking dwarf too."

They approached and offered a quick salute before reporting. Ragnar began:

"Second building is clear too, sir. Though it was like the first. Sufficient supplies for goblins, but only two of 'em. Both of 'em were on the roof. We'd seen 'em up there and went to go investigate. One of dem had a bow, I thought we were goners for sure, but he must have been relieving his bladder over the side or something. He never even raised his bow. Might have thought we was goblins too with all this snow. By the time we was close enough Aardvark here bowled him over. He didn't get a chance after that. There was another one up there, another drunk one."

Aardvark chimed in here.

"Aye, that sword just didn't swing right, so I tackled him too."

Ragnar muttered under his breath "Swinging it like a bloody axe the fool" and kept shaking his head.

Apparently unperturbed Aardvark continued "When he seen what we did to the other, he just doubled up and started laughin'. Put up a fight sure enough when we went to it, but kept yammerin' in dwarf "Stasost shoot you dead. Omospoxxo be ours.". I can only assume that Stasost is their leader. Must be holed up in the third building."

So, it was good news and bad. Only five goblins between ten stories of their fortress. Where had all the rest of them gone? Or worse, when would they be back. And more importantly, there were obviously more of them in the third building. Likely more than Ragnar and Aardvark had found in the first two, and from the sounds of it, we had all been very lucky. A goblin captain. Trained in the use of a range

weapon. Not good.

Still, it was time to begin work. If they hoped to recieve any supplies and support they had best make their home more accessible.

"Good work you two. Ragnar, we'll need lumber if we're to settle in, and for our forges. Aardvark, mind scouting around with that great toothpick of yours?"

"Any of you have ideas of how to go about dealing with the goblin leader?" (posting opportunity for y'all. Not that I don't have ideas, but I'd like to hear your input.)

"Fre, does a bow do ye any good?"

Coming up from below to answer the shouted question he (or she if you're ok with female) was shaking his head.

"Not really. Strings too long to use on the crossbow I've got, and I wouldn't know where to begin with the bow itself."

"Don't worry. We'll find ye something then. Keep your eyes open. Now, lets get this warren cleared out and get some workshops going."

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 02, 2008, 04:11:36 pm**

4th of Felsite

It is now late spring. Supposedly. I realize I haven't written in some time, and I can only explain that by saying that we've been busy. Very, very busy. Our situation is perhaps more interesting than I originally imagined. We continued to have freezing temperatures for all of Granite, and the next month too. Occasionally we would get bouts of sunshine, but not enough to warm more than the upper crust of this frozen rock. There is a river nearby, that according to dwarven charts is named 'The Honey of Trenches'. I wonder what the cartographer was thinking. With all the snowfall it's possible that like the last goblin he too was perhaps just a little crazy. The only thing in the river bed is ice. But I have hope. Though it is late spring, winter still appears to have this place in it's grip but it did rain today. Some plants are starting to shoot up through the frozen crust and places are beginning to thaw.

I only hope the river thaws as well. It would be nice to have a water supply. Fre has been antsy to get some crops in before too late in the year, and I must admit our diminishing food supplies have me concerned as well. There is little to no game we can catch, no running water to fish in, and no way we can start farming without water at all. I've asked Fre to collect as many edible plants as he (she) can find to augment our dwindling food supplies.

On the bright side, Aardvark has done an in depth scout of our area. It didn't take long apparently. It seems that the path we came in on dissappeared under an avalance and we seem to be somewhat trapped on this cliff we're on. Two of the goblin structures have their entrances here but there is no way up to the higher plateau to our west where lies the river, nor to the third goblin building to our east, where possible exists a path out. The structure we've taken up residence in thankfully extends all the way down to the lower plateau and I've considered ordering one of the miners to open up access to it as soon as possible. They've already got their hands full gutting this place and clearing it out for us though. I may have to put them on digging a channel to the river, just in case it does thaw for a week or two in summer.

In any case, with the improving weather we've spotted some other goblins about, though they appear to be cut off from their leader by our presence. At least one is up on the cliffs near the river, possibly a lookout. Below us is a guard near the entrance to Stasost's place. Fre is particularly happy about the guard. It seems that he's carrying a crossbow of some sort. I don't know if that's good or bad. Though I'm sure Ragnar and Aardvark will have to flip one of the many assorted coins we've found about this place to see which of them goes first when they charge it.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **July 02, 2008, 05:22:57 pm**

-Fre pulls aside Paulus in a hallway-

Oi, you know, I've been thinkin about what to do with that bowmaster over in the other tower. We've got some wood, right? Well, what if Ragnar made a couple of cages with it? That should be able to hold the gobbos. Then, we mine right into the tower from beneath, set up a few cage traps, and get our arses behind a corner somewhere. Then, when we hear the traps trigger, we jump out and give em a big surprise. If the cage doesn't get em, Ragnar and Aardvark would!

(And I'm ok with Fre being a girl, just make her an in-your-face kinda girl.)

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 02, 2008, 10:57:04 pm**

Paulus nods as he listens to Fre explain how they try to lure the goblin Stasost to his untimely death.

"That certainly might work. We'll have to check out the building itself first of course, send a scout in to figure out where he is. Were it not for the fact that if and when he becomes aware of us I'd rather not be the topic of report to a goblin war leader, I'd be tempted to seal them in permanently and just ignore them. But, let's face it. Sooner or later the rest of the goblins that built this place will probably return. I'd prefer to have lots of nasty little surprises in store for them when that happens.

We'll have to discuss this more in depth later. No reason to open a new keg when we still have half a dozen we're working on. Good idea though."

The idea had occured to him as Fre was explaining that if they really wanted to they could simply seal him in the upper floors and just collapse the whole building on them. It would certainly accomplish their goal, but seemed like a waste of good obsidian. Stone he was already making plans for.

No, Fre's idea was much more practical than his. Less amusing than seeing a building collapse around an undoubtedly surprised goblin leader perhaps, but certainly much more practical.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 02, 2008, 11:10:27 pm**

9th of Felsite

Spring has certainly arrived, though a little late in coming. We've finally cleared out enough of the cumbersome stone and doorways the goblins have put in their structure. Enough to live in at least. I caught poor Steele sleeping out next to the cliff the other night. The ground still freezed solid at nights, so it's somewhat of a surprise that he didn't too. I've had him carving some obsidian blocks and doors though to use in the future. Near future hopefully.

Construction on the upper ramp to the river has begun, and scarcely had they started when Mafol came hurrying back to report they had struck a vein of Limonite. That certainly made my day. I had seen some chalk cliffs on our way in. That grin and bounce in my step could only mean one of two things. And we hadn't found gold. Better far for us, indeed. We now had what we needed to make Steel. Perhaps those miners were right in wanting to try and settle here to begin with. I shudder to think that the goblins knew about this. Their skill with metal thankfully only extended as far as iron, from what I hear learned from tribes far to the south who may have acquired the

information from elves. Or so rumors say. I somehow doubt that even elves would stoop so far as to sell the secrets of iron to a race such as the goblins, but in any case that would have been centuries ago. Thankfully goblin skill hasn't improved that much with time. Time has passed quickly here. We're constantly busy and still sleeping on bare stone, but hopefully that will change soon.

I've finally gotten our central staircase completed. No more running around this infernally complicated building to get to the right floor. I've placed our workshops two floors down, our supplies and current lodgings just one down from the roof. The cold still seeps in, but it hasn't been as bad recently. Looking forward to the thawing of the river.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 02, 2008, 11:27:51 pm**

21st of Felsite

It's been unseasonably warm today. Just slightly above freezing, at least here in the valley. The pine are even starting to look green again. Aardvark climbed a cliff during his break to check on the river for me as we haven't finished the ramp up there yet. We're still cleaning up after the goblins, with all the stuff they've thrown about. At least should some traders arrive we'll have some goods to trade even if we haven't made any of it ourselves. In any case, the river hadn't thawed yet. In fact there was still a few inches of snow within a hundred feet of the bank. I've not taken the time to observe it but I suspect it lies in shadow much of the day, as some pools nearer us have thawed. Aardvark even spotted a turtle. Good eating if we can catch it. I hadn't designated the work for the water channel yet, which was just as well. At this rate the river may never thaw, except in really really warm weather. Perhaps in late summer or fall. In any case, we'll need a water supply just in case. I've ordered a pool dug in the back wall of the lowest floor of our building with a shaft going straight up nearly 100 feet next to a staircase. We'll drain the pools from below without compromising the structure.

With luck when the wall crumbles we'll get the turtle too. And then Fre will have her farms. She's been a little testy about that lately. What with Aardvark and Ragnar bawling drinking songs in the middle of the night and bragging about defeating two thirds of the entire goblin occupation force I suspect she's ready to swipe their axe and use it on them. I still haven't designated the lower wall to punch through, which is just as well. We're isolated on our little cliff here and kept well away from the goblins below and above for now.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **July 02, 2008, 11:35:19 pm**

((Just wanted to remind you: goblin towers don't collapse. They're made of solid stone, not constructed, so they stay intact in the case of a cave-in, just move a few z-levels down.))

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 03, 2008, 11:13:52 am**

((Hmm... I didn't know that. It's good to know though. That would have been very dissapointing. A four story drop... and nothing. It's ok, it would have been very impractical to do, and I'd prefer the original stone to remain rather than having to reconstruct the walls and floors. I've actually never had a cave-in or anything like that happen before so it's simply never come up.))

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 03, 2008, 11:34:22 am**

1st of Hematite

Well, it's early summer. Despite the fact that it's much nicer indoors it has been good to get some fresh air that wasn't freezing my breath in my beard. Our plateau and the lower one are now awash with green. I've had Fre try gathering local plants to supplement our food supply as we haven't gotten any farms up and running. But the lake draining project is coming along well enough. We'll have to be quick about it or things may start to freeze before we're ready. There is a lot we can do in the winter, but irrigate isn't one of them.

Aardvark has been busy deforesting around our building. We now have a reasonable supply of logs. Enough to begin making some much needed beds. I grow tired of sleeping on stone. There is so much that we really need to do, and so little time we have to do it in. I fear I'm pushing a little too hard, but at least our alcohol supply remains strong, and so morale hasn't been too bad. We've finally managed to get our area cleaned up from after the goblins and only in the lower floors now is there that tell-tale odor. That too should dissapear once we start renovating there as well. But first things first. Most of us have been relegated to tasks outside of our area of expertise. We all kind of expected it and so it hasn't been too bad.

Usually we spend the evening in the common room, surrounded by our barrels of food and drink and sit chatting as the light fades. It's been nice to reminisce a little about Kilrudmorul. I recall it being much better as a child. The place seemed to diminish in my eyes somewhat as I grew older. The population had grown drastically too, and then came the wars. I had only been a child of a few seasons when that had taken place. We were all put to work though. Since I was a child they let me do pretty much whatever I felt inclined to do. Mostly that had involved playing in the ill-used mechanics shop amidst all the gears and mechanisms. Occasionally the master mechanic, Morul, or one of his assistants would dash in to grab some equipment they were installing. But generally I had the run of the place if I wanted it. Both my parents had been in the military. My father was a Marksdwarf. My mother in the infantry. I was apparently born shortly after they immigrated. They never mentioned where they came from before that. I never thought to ask. Kilrudmorul had been my home, I assumed, naively that it would remain that way.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 03, 2008, 11:52:55 am**

21st of Hematite

The shout of alarm was raised for the first time since our initial arrival. My first gut reaction was that the goblins had returned and were attacking. Reason took over after that. They still had no easy way to get down here. In fact, we didn't even have a way to get off this cliff yet. Not since the avalance had blocked the northern road. I was only two floors down working on an obsidian mechanism when I heard the shout. It sounded like Fre.

Making a dash for the stairs I arrived at the roof just in time to see Fre sprinting around the corner of the other building shouting at the top of her lungs.

"Where ya gonna go little kobold? Gonna grow wings and fly away?"

Kobolds? Here? How had they gotten down. Or up. I followed after Fre and as I was turning the corner I saw Ragnar and Aardvark arrive armed as well, it looked like they were calling down to the others. By the time I caught up with Fre it looked like she had things well in hand. Apparently she caught up to the little thief near the second corner of the other building and had tackled it. Now, I'm not usually one to stereotype, but I hadn't expected a Marksdwarf to lay into a kobold quite so thoroughly, but apparently Fre was in the process of venting. By the time I got there the poor creature had, by the looks of it, already had both it's legs broken as well as a hand, and there were some rather severe bruises forming on it's torso. Mercifully it had blacked out. It was lucky. Fre obviously hadn't quite finished with it. Moving on towards where it had been running I noticed a rope dangling from one of the trees near the edge of the cliff leading down. The thief had actually scaled the side of the mountain to get in. A second rope was tied near it, bouncing up and down rapidly. Looking over the side I saw another of the thieves making his getaway at the bottom of the 20 dwarf-high cliff. Quite a distance to climb. Hopefully he hadn't gotten away with anything useful.

By the time I got back the others had gathered. Ragnar and Aardvark were slapping Fre on the back and congratulating her on the fine bit of wrestling. Mafol and Medtom were still standing near the entrance, pick in hand looking for any more problems. It seemed strange to me that kobolds would come to us to steal, but made sense when I thought about it more. The goblins had left plenty of stuff just lying around. It would have been easy for them to swipe some. We'd have to be more careful, just because we were isolated didn't mean things couldn't get to us. It just made it harder.

That evening we all sat around drinking and discussed the situation. A quick inventory had shown that the other thief had gotten away with all 35 *Iron Arrows* we had obtained from the goblin guard. Those alone would have purchased food and drink for all of us for another three months, maybe more. Such theft couldn't be tolerated and the kobolds success would only inspire others. Worse, it had gotten away. Word would get out that we were here. And not to the right kind of creatures. We'd need some time to get things in place but I felt it was time to act. It was time to claim the rest of this place as our own.

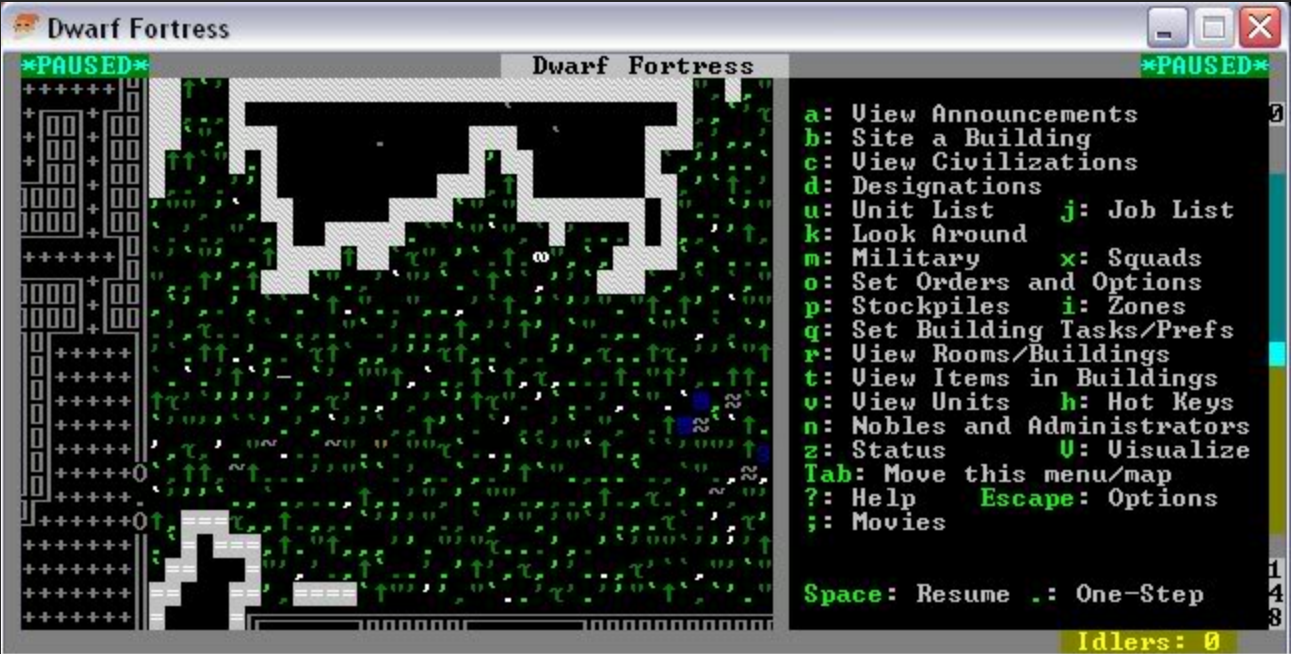
Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 03, 2008, 01:17:36 pm**

8th of Malachite

Our preparations for the ongoing occupation are now complete. There was a minor delay nearly a week ago. Only one week after the first two thieves came a third showed up. How it managed to get ahold of our exceptionally well crafter Nickel-silver earrings is beyond me. I can't believe no one saw it until Ragnar spotted it climbing out of the stairs on the roof. He dropped the rock he had been carrying and drew his axe, grinning.

The kobold of course took one look at him and ran back down the stairs. I'm still not quite sure where it was intending to go, but on the bottom floor it ran into Fre and Aardvark who were helping clear the area our water supply and farms will go. They immediately jumped on the thing and beat it to a bloody pulp. Dwaves 2 Kobolds 1. It was that one that still bothered me though. And the fact that a third had shown up so near the first two indicated that there must be a bolt hole of theirs nearby.

On to bigger problems though. Last night Mafol and Medtom broke through the lower wall of our building as quietly as possible. The location was well chosen and should have been amply covered by the trees growing nearby. Aardvark and Ragnar snuck out and made their approach on the goblin sentry. It was the perfect textbook ambush. The goblin was leaning against a tree, facing the other way. I was quietly watching from the roof, through the fortifications the goblins had so conveniently provided us.



It was a short battle. And a brutal one. Ragnar charged around the trees to the south, Aardvark to the north hoping to catch the goblin by surprise. Thankfully they did and it's first bolt only grazed Ragnar as he cut into the goblins right leg cleaving through the leather and cutting into flesh. But the goblin was quick to reload. Quicker than expected. A second bolt followed the first but buried itself into Ragnars gut as Aardvark yanked the goblin backwards and Ragnar chopped into it's other leg, severing it entirely. The goblin was much tougher than expected. It stood on it's remaining leg and tried weakly to continue the fight but Aardvark shield bashed it from behind stunning it while Ragnar leveled a fierce blow and in his fury struck so hard that the goblin flew nearly ten paces and struck a tree, disintegrating in the process.

We weren't sure if there were more goblins about and since I didn't want to press the issue with Ragnar wounded I called the pair back. I certainly didn't want to lose either of them. Ragnar had already been invaluable against the goblins and recently, after deciding to give the trees a reprieve, had cobbled together some very fuctional pine beds. Aardvark I'm sure would prove more than useful once we got our metalworks up and running properly. I'd given plans to Aardvark that I'd had and we now had a wood furnace and smelter. There still remained the forge proper, but time enough for that come winter. We still needed to secure a water source and the river had finally thawed just yesterday. Still, we'll drain the pools first. The work for them is almost complete and I doubt we'd have time to did a proper channel to the river before it refreezes.

Calling Steele up as the two soldiers made their way back indoors I indicated the two remaining buildings.

"Hoy Steele. You remember those ten obsidian blocks I hade you make a while back? I want you to go seal off those two buildings. Good and tight. Make it look as much as possible like the natural stone. I'd rather nothing else try and make those their place of residence until we're ready to expand into them ourselves. We'll just seal the goblins in that one until we decide what to do with them."

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 03, 2008, 02:21:15 pm**

12th of Malachite

It's only been four days since we jumped the lower guard. Ragnar appears to be recovering fine. It seems like his deer skin armor helped absorb much of the damage and though he had bled considerably when he yanked the arrow out he insisted that he'd be fine. Of course before our evening blow I noticed he'd broken into one of the rum barrels and cleaned the wound before dousing it liberally with rum. Then he doused himself liberally, or rather his insides with it too. Funny, he didn't seem to drink less that evening with the rest of us either. There's a dwarf what likes his liquor.

Today however was good. We finally broke through the crust of the upper plateau with our ramp. Medtob and Mafol did good work with it. I've my doubts that a wagon'll be able to get down it but we'll see when the time comes. Unfortunately our labors there were apparently noticed by the goblin sentries up above and as soon as we broke through the thing was there, flapping it's gums and charging the miners. What a sight that made. Two dwarves with picks and covered in dirt being charged by a lone, unarmed goblin. They just looked at each other and pretended the goblin was a rock wall. Medtob was limping a little after the struggle but shrugged it off when I asked about it. The goblin had both it's legs and back perforated profusely with picks. We tossed it in the garbage pile and pressed on. Our activites seemed to draw sufficient attention from the other sentry up there and we noticed him tossing rocks at us below.

Pulling Fre aside we stared up the nearly hundred foot cliff at the little figure trying to hit us with fist sized rocks.

"Fre, I've got a job for ye. Now, that little bugger has been a pest. More so recently I'd say. Now that we have a way up there why don't you go try out that new crossbow of yours."

Fre just smiled and nodded. And took off running towards the temporary armory. I figured I'd head up to see how things went and to get the lay of the land from the vantage the top there provided. Fre passed me again on my way up the ramp. I wasn't hurrying. The Bismuth bronze crossbow seemed to fit well in her hands, the nearly full quiver at her hip. From the look on her face it looked like it was her birthday and rite of passage combined.

I made the top just as she was angling around the cliff, the oblivious goblin still looking for targets to throw stuff at far below. Her first bolt went wide, as did her second. By then the goblin had noticed her and started howling towards her. The thing must have been half mad. It'd been trapped on this half-frozen cliffside for months now. It probably caught fish from the lakes behind it to eat. It seemed though that with the first two shots she was just getting the feel for the weapon since her third pierced it's left arm through and stuck. The forth bolt caught it in the chest as it stood there looking at it's arm and then it fell over. It lay there immobile while Fre carefully took aim and put a second bolt next to the first in it's chest. She stopped after that. No reason to waste good iron bolts on target practice.

I gave a look see around this upper plateau and was pleased with what I saw. There was still snow on the ground near the river, despite it being high summer. But this was the first time I'd been out of the valley since we arrived. It was a glorious view. The landscape around was visible to the east all the way to the horizon. To the west there towered more of the high mountain range, nigh impassable. The main trade roads lay north-south along our position here, which made it a very useful stronghold. I even saw some deer as I looked around in a smallish meadow north of us, near where the avalanche had struck and destroyed the path. It looked like the old path we had taken was accessible from here. Our ramp would be very useful, provided it could be used by wagons, and wasn't covered with ice.

Glancing at the stones to be found here I grinned in spite of the chill wind that had begun to pick up. I had noticed several exposed gemstone clusters, exposed by the elements. And a vein of Magnetite, with streaks of silvery metal, possibly platinum. The miners had been correct indeed that this place harbored useful resources. Perhaps that's why the goblins came too. Perhaps not. They had made little effort to utilize them. This place seemed almost more of a hideout, or regrouping ground of sorts. Lots of supplies, enough goblins to hold it if they had been watchful. There was the key. Goblins, watchful with a mountain of supplies. Yeah. That just didn't happen. It's no wonder half of them had been drunk. Still, we needed to be careful. We'd already had several thieves come, and two of our own were injured still. It wouldn't take much to become disaster. If they were careful though and planned properly it could be avoided.

Dorenemal indeed. Diamond sense this place had been christened, and just now it felt that was a very, very fitting name. Agna hadn't bargained with this perhaps. He had underestimated the goblin force here, as well as us, or so I hoped.

We are the Fahlstrom clan, we are the Wall of Zeal!

Enough of reveries, I've got to go get to work. There's a lot of clean up to do and this place still isn't operating properly. We're low on food for one. I must make the farming priority. Or find another way to obtain food. And soon.

Title: Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 03, 2008, 02:30:16 pm

27th of Malachite

The river has frozen again. This lends significant weight to needing to finish the water supply. I've also tallied our food stores. I dare not say how dangerously low we are. Should it come to that I hope we would be able to hunt and gather sufficient plants to survive. At this point I'm relying more on any reinforcements and supplies we might be able to trade for. Hopefully we get supplies soon though. We've gone through all our dried meat and are down to a few plump helmets and the seeds and berries Fre foraged earlier this year.

It's strange. Earlier today we had a racoon brazenly walk in past three sleeping dwarves and try to make off with the same nickel-silver earrings the kobold had. Ragnar spotted it trying to get away and soon parted it from the earrings, and this life in a shower of gore. I wonder if we can eat what's left of it? I'll see if Fre is willing to look into that since we're still working on her farms. I daresay the episode she's had with the kobold and then the goblin have put her in a better mood. She's almost been giddy.

PS

We had another racoon today show up and try to steal something. I just barely managed to grab it before it broke out into the open. Apparently it had taken a fancy to a nice mole-bone crown the goblins left behind. We took a fancy to it. Fre will have another racoon to dress out and cook up.

Title: Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 03, 2008, 05:51:24 pm

23rd of Galena

Summer's been getting on and I've been anxious to have our water supply finished. I've heard of outposts that've started fine and in less perilous situations than ours spend time carving out rooms and making trade goods. By the time they realized they were running low on drink all the rivers had frozen. Dying of dehydration isn't pretty.

Not our problem now thankfully. Our lower pool is finally finished and I had Mafol do the honors of tunnelling up to the bottom of the lake. He did it in style, and the whooping shouts coming from the shaft as he sped down it amid a torrent of water helped brighten our day. One of the few bright spots recently. Even with the two raccoons we've caught we still only just barely have enough. We're down to essentially a month worths of food. Racoon meat and Plump helmet anyone? After that we start eating seeds and nuts that Fre foraged. Not great but beats starving. I'm beginning to think we've been abandoned out here, but at least with fresh water available we have drink. Of course, we haven't checked the water yet to ensure that it's safe, but if a goblin can camp out up there for a whole season it can't be that deadly.

Title: Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 03, 2008, 06:16:14 pm

28th of Limestone

Well, the indoor lake project didn't quite turn out as we had intended. Not necessarily in a bad way, thankfully. We must have finished it just in time too. The lake hadn't even drained fully when it froze solid. It was uncanny walking back up our shaft to where the lake was to find a wall of solid ice. I swore there as still a turtle in there. We might have to chip it out if it comes to that. I requested Steele that he seal off the hole with a door, so we could control the water flow come next year. The bottom of the lakebed was nice black sand though. Good quality stuff. We might be able to use it in the future, but for now we had enough work as it was. We'd barely gotten settled indoors and already it was getting cold again. With a little supplemental help from Fre our food supplies were extended till now.

Thankfully today marked the first time we had visitors. A trade caravan from Etagzasit arrived along with the outpost liason assigned to us by the crown. The liason could make himself comfortable and wait. The caravan apparently couldn't. They were somewhat impatient to get back on the trail and catch up with their wagons that hadn't stopped. Not my fault they came from the east. Had they used the westerly path there was a nice ramp to get to us with. Still, they brought much needed supplies. I was amazed at how valuable goblin equipment was considered. One of the merchants explained it to me like this:

"Well now, some interesting leatherworking by all accounts. And not even in dwarven sizes. Now what dwarf in their right mind would make something that doesn't fit?"

To which I of course responded:"Well, our ... uh... resident craftsman had this terrible illness this spring, he's down to a shadow of is former self. But he only makes things that fit him, so that's what were stuck with."

The merchant looked stunned for a second or two before belting out gales of laughter.

"Nah, mate. I know where those come from. Ye even missed a spot o' blood or two cleanin' em. Don't worry. It's remarkable what market we find for this rot. The humans use them for their we'uns. Apparently fits remarkably well, so that's the major market. But some dwarves in larger mountain homes have taken to wearing some items too. They call it 'fashionable' whatever that means. Probably started by some fop-wearin' noble what thought it made him look fierce. They're considered 'exotic' clothing items."

"Really? Well, we have more inside."

"Ah, well, save it for next year. Looks like another storm is blowin' in. We'd best be leavin' soon. Don't want to be caught before winter hits in this range. I certainly don't envy you gents. You'll be snowed in for months if you're not careful."

In the end they were in a rather big hurry so we didn't get to unload all of the stuff we found. But we managed to obtain some of their more useful items. A nice bar of pewter, some well-crafted pigtail trousers, just so we had an extra pair. An empty tower cap barrel. May need it eventually. A pig tail rope. Very useful, especially if we wanted to make a well of our newly made indoor lake. And food! They didn't have much, but we bought it all. Six full barrels of plump helmets and a barrel each of horse, jaguar, cougar and groundhog meat. Oh, and a bag of dwarven sugar. Might be edible. That should be sufficient to see us through, or so I hoped. And I even managed to get a surprise for Fre. I wasn't sure we needed them, but I didn't want an axe to be our only weapon should she run out of bolts. And Aardvark had that sword but apparently preferred using the shield as a weapon. So I got 25 well-crafted steel bolts for the lass. Maybe now she forgive me for saying we didn't have enough water to irrigate any farms for her yet. I tried to get a pair of steel greaves from the traders as well but he got a little huffy and said something about 'needin' to make a profit as well'. I let him keep them. We needed them to come back.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 03, 2008, 06:49:05 pm**

15th of Moonstone

Well, apparently it's early winter. I can't see through repeated blizzards to chech though so I'll just have to accept the word of whichever southern idiot thought to base the seasons on the calendar. While the Vabok the outpost liason was appraising the place and meeting with us we had another kobold try to make it in. We were in the southern plateau a few hundred feet out working on a wall to isolate our lower door from the rest of the world. The bugger had the nerve to try to sneak by me in the snow. I'm not sure it ocured to the rat that he leaves a trail. Anyways, I was carrying some stone for the wall when we passed. The thought of the rat trying to steal some more of our rightfully obtained loot infuriated me so much I threw the rough stone block at it. I must give credit where credit is due. I fully intended to have to chase after the filthy kobold, but he froze when he saw that rock and it hit him square in the chest. I vented the rest of my frustration on the thing until it stopped twitching. I feel better now.

I also had the foresight to call an alarm when I spotted it and Ragnar went and stood guard near the other entrance. Sure enough, within minutes a second kobold popped it's head up the stairwell, the same Giant mole bown crown clutched in it's grubby paws that the raccoon had attempted to steal. Were they somehow in cahoots? Was it possible they simply thought alike or were koblods like little shapechangers? In any case, Ragnar dealt with the kobold much as he had dealt with the racoon. I'm beginning to wonder about Ragnar's state of mind lately too, now that I mention it.

In anycase the Liason wrapped things up quickly once I had a chair placed in an unused section of the goblin fort and called that my 'office'. I sat there as he talked, and then we traded places. It was all rather strange. I'm not sure he entirely grasped the circumstances of our situation.

"So Mr. uh..." Shuffles through some papers.

"Paulus. Just call me Paulus."

"Ok. Paulus, I must say I'm quite impressed what you've managed so far. It hasn't even been a full year and already you've made three very impressive structures. Very defensible by the looks of it. I can understand they're still being worked on, as that's normal. But still very impressive work. One of the others said you had the other two buildings sealed off until you felt like you could use them. Shows foresight. Planning for growth already."

I wondered who had told that little white lie.

"Anyways, I've assessed your overall value as an outpost. It's worth just over two hundred thousand ingots."

I choked. He looked at me somewhat crossly.

"I understand you may have been expecting more. The structures alone warrent nearly that much, but from what I've seen you've done little more than build here. The infra-structure is somewhat lacking. In any case, that's probably still ten times what many normal settlements are worth at the one year mark. You should be proud of what you've accomplished. Now on to trade matters..."

The meeting was purely numbers after that. Two-hundred thousand ingots. That estimate alone should ensure a great report for immigration. I groaned. We were nowhere close to ready for more people. Still, when it came down to it, the report would be favorable. I was concerned that Agna would have his hand in this as well and that we'd get an extremely biased liason. Such things had been known to break settlements. If I recall in the history of Kilrudmorul the early years had been particularly tough. No liason had shown up at all and so they had been at the mercy of what few meager merchants could make it through. It was almost five years after the founding when someone had found the liasons body up in the hill on a cliff, the goblin bolt still stuck in his ribcage.

Now that the first year was over and favorable it only meant we had more work to do. Much more work. I called a meeting that night. Spirits were high, Fre and Aardvark it appeared had been drinking a little too much. As the chatter died down I filled everyone in on the meeting.

Steele commented:" That's good then. We'll get more hands in here before too long. Things'll go quicker."

Mafol and Medtom nodded, grinned and helped themselves to another round.

Ragnar just shrugged.

Fre and Aardvark had long since not been paying attention.

I kind of understood the feeling. It was both good and bad. With success and prosperity came other complications. It would no longer be just us seven. And that would certainly complicate things.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 03, 2008, 10:40:09 pm**

19th of Opal

Well, well, well. Actually just one. While Steele was busy working on the construction I had Fre fish out anything useful from the water of the lake. We got lucky! Two turtles. It told her I'd split them with her. She just glared at me and said she already had a turtle dinner planned and I wasn't invited. I hadn't gotten her her farms yet. Well, the last part was true, undoubtedly. So I let her get away with it. I'm not big on raw turtle and she'd be the one preparing them. It might be safer to just eat horse again.

We finished the lower wall as well as a ramp leading from the lower plateau to the upper. Now there was only one entrance into our main hold and the other buildings should have been sealed off by now. I'd not bothered to ask Steele about it yet. We've been so busy it's possible he hasn't gotten around to it. In terms of defenses it makes it rather nice. All traffic will have to pass through the gap between the second building and the ledge. It's maybe wide enough for three wagons abreast. If they're lucky. I've been preparing some surprises of my own, and though Aardvark grumbled a little when I said he'd have to make his own charcoal and smelt his own ore he got to it. We've begun working on steel and should have enough to arm and equip ourselves soon. Ok, with only Aardvark doing all the work it was likely to take much longer than that.

One of the things Steele has been working on was getting us some decent stone furniture. Some tables and chairs to start with. Now our common area was beginning to feel more like living space, though still too close to the surface to be proper for dwarves. With hard work we'd be able to move into proper quarters below before too long.

At the meeting I called for any ideas regarding defenses we could propose, knowing that we had very limited space and massive cliffs helping, or hindering depending on how you looked at it.

We'll see what the others come up with.

Of course we'll have traps. Those are one of my specialties. I am a mechanic after all.

((Feel free to suggest any defensive structures you'd like to see enacted. I'll take all ideas under consideration. Keep in mind we have three plateaus, makes it hard for very large scale projects and such since there really isn't much space between the cliffs and the buildings. I'll be back after the holidays))

Title: Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Skanky on July 04, 2008, 05:54:12 am

((I generally favour spamming obsidian sword weapon traps, but I tend not to use an actual military force either))

Title: Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: DarkMagnus on July 06, 2008, 09:45:08 pm

"Weapon traps?!" scoffs Ragnar. "Waste a' perfectly good trainin'! Cage traps, says I. Easy t'make, and then we get plenty 'a gobbos to carve up in the barracks, aye?" The dwarf turns to Aardvark with a grin. "And th' next time we go paint the fortress red, h' bout a gentledwarf's wager? I'll gut more gobbos than ye, says I. Winner gets th' first crack at the leader, aye?"

Title: Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 09, 2008, 01:52:31 pm

25th of Opal

Fre pulled me aside today as I was loading some traps.

"I know ye ordered the third building sealed but I figured I'd check it out before Steele got around to it. I asked him to put it off a tad so I could get have a look see. There were quite a few of the buggers there, and I got a look at the so-called leader of theirs. Big cuss, tough looking too. Had a scar on his neck that looked like it ran all the way down his arm. Carrying a rather large iron bow too. Oh, and he had a bodyguard with him. I thought you'd want to know before we sealed them in."

I was initially surprised. I had thought the building long since sealed. However, if Fre had been in and seen the leader perhaps it was indeed time to do something about it. An iron bow? The goblin's choice of weapons seemed strange to me. I thought about it some more before calling Ragnar, Aardvark and Fre to me.

"Thanks for coming you three. It seems Fre has showed some initiative and checked out the third building."

Aardvark showed some a mix of surprise and concern but Ragnar merely nodded grimly.

"I think it's time we cleaned the place out. Make a sweep of the whole place as it were. Aardvark, how's the smelting going? Could you make an axe for yourself?"

"Ach, it's going well enough. I've been making charcoal, iron bars and pig iron bars. I've even managed two bars of steel. It should be enough for an axe. Why?"

"I've thought about how best to deal with the goblin leader. Fre suggested some ways to neutralize him but after her scouting report I'm convinced those precautions won't be necessary. According to Fre the goblin is wielding a large wicked looking Iron bow."

Fre nodded her accord.

"Ragnar, Aardvark you remember that goblin on the roof you found with an iron bow? Recall that he didn't fire at you even though he had enough time? I'm convinced the weapon is purely used for intimidation within their own ranks. Goblins aren't tall enough to properly use such weapons. That's why Fre couldn't use the bow also. We're all just too short. The leader has little more than a large iron club."

I grinned wide.

"So I want you three to go teach him a lesson. I'm sending all of you to minimize potential problems and injuries. I want this done quick. I'll go get Steele to seal up the building on the south side when you're done and then have the miners open it up on the north side inside our wall. That will give us access to it without having to worry about intruders. So Aardvark, get that axe made and then you three can clean out the building. And be careful. It may still just be a large iron stick, but that goblin didn't get his rank by being weak."

Title: Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 09, 2008, 04:08:50 pm

28th of Opal

Hopefully the last day of the goblin occupation of Dorenemal. It was still early morning as I carefully followed Aardvark, Ragnar and Fre across the frozen ground outside our structure. The grass crunched as we walked on it, but little other sound was heard in the cool air. Winter was coming to an end, and all of us were eager to finish our first year here well. It had only been about 6 months that the goblins had know of us, and by then it was too late to do anything about it. We had separated the goblins on the cliffs above from those beneath. Now only the final structure lay before us to be cleansed.

I noted the smoothed obsidian blocks framing the entrance way, leaving only just enough space for us to slip in. The structure had appeared to be five or six stories from the outside, taller than our own building, in actuality. Fre had already been through the place and assured us that the first three floors would likely still be empty. They were. At least of the living.

On the second floor we noticed the first corpse. A goblin, still reeking strongly of their unnatural wine. He had four bolts sticking in him. It appeared that Fre had pinned his arms to his body before shooting him in the neck. A single broken bolt to one side told me that she hadn't missed much.

A floor up we found two others. A second drunk. though equally dead. This one only had two bolts in him. One buried deep in his chest,

apparently through one lung, and possibly the heart. A second had caught the creature through and eye socket. Apparently it had moved a little after being hit, but not much, and had likely bled to death in a matter of seconds. Two bolts lay shattered against the far wall.

A few rooms over we found a dead guard. One of the bolts had shattered on his shield, leaving part of it embedded in it. Three others lay embedded in the guards body. One in the torso, opposite the heart, but still likely through a lung. He must have staggered to one side after that shot and had exposed his left side as he also had one through his arm and a second in his calf.

By the time we reached the fourth floor my anxiety was mounting. I wasn't a soldier, but I couldn't help coming to watch. I wanted to see what we would possibly be facing in the future. As we neared the area where Fre had spotted our enemy a few days ago we heard sounds of movement from ahead. Ragnar and Aardvark silently approached an corridor, one on either side as Fre pulled a few pebbles from a pouch at her belt and motioned for me to be quiet. She pulled out a small handful and after listening carefully sent a few small ones scattering down the corridor. The sound of pebbles bouncing on smoothed obsidian seemed almost inaudible to me over the beat of my heart in my ears, but something must have heard it.

The goblin turned the corner and began coming down the hall. We could hear it approaching, the soft clink of metal, the quiet incomprehensible muttering. As it appeared Fre loosed a bolt but it went wide, striking the ceiling before deflecting harmlessly away. The goblin saw us and charged right as Ragnar stepped out to greet it. The goblin barreled into him, leading the way with it's hammer as Ragnar too led in with his axe. In a second the two of them lay on the floor. Ragnar stunned and struggling for breath, it having been knocked out of him by the hammer. The goblin hadn't been stunned but hadn't escaped unharmed either. Ragnar had opened up a gash on it's lower left leg. As the goblin stood Fre nailed it in one hip with a bolt and Aardvark opened up it's side with his new axe. From there it was a matter of seconds before Aardvark had laid it open from leg to jaw with two massive strokes, slamming it against the wall near the corridor.

We went silent for a few seconds. We heard nothing moving. Complete silence. I had expected the goblin leader to come charging down the corridor, but nothing. Had he noticed?

Aardvark helped Ragnar up, but I could tell Ragnar was still struggling for breath some and looked considerably paler than normal. I insisted he return lest he do more permanent damage and to my surprise he didn't complain. Simply nodded and went. He was rubbing his chest still. I hoped he wasn't too badly injured.

After waiting what seemed like an eternity we pressed on. Aardvark leading, Fre behind him crossbow at the ready and me following behind. A near silent observer. The hallway ended at one side of a very large room. Easily three wagons wide and maybe twice or three times that long. A dim light filtered down from the other side of the room, indicating the presence of a staircase there possibly. In the darkness I saw him for the first time though. Stasost Usbunguzo the goblin bowman. The irony struck me there. He noticed us and charged, brandishing his bow like a cherished weapon but making no move towards the quiver at his hip. The thought 'I had been right' echoed like the crack from Fre's bolt as it shattered against the far wall, missing him. My goodness he was big. And fast. Fre managed to put her second bolt into his right thigh as he ran towards us. Aardvark assumed a defensive position in front of Fre, shielding her bodily but allowing her room to fire.

Fre's third bolt caught Stasost in the right arm, rendering his shield arm injured, he was still coming and didn't appeared much fazed by the bolts. It wasn't until the fourth bolt took him in the other leg at nearly point blank ranged that he showed shock. A deep ichor rose appeared even through his leather and quickly began to spread. He made a swipe at Aardvark with his bow which was quickly caught and blocked by the axe. Aardvark countered but the goblin sidestepped just as Fre shot, causing her to miss as well. Stastost swung again with his bow, clipping Aardvark on the side of the head, dazing him slightly. But rather than sieze the opportunity he quickly sized up the situation and did what most goblins do at some point. Ran for his life.

Fre's last bolt caught him in the upper arm and knocked him down. Aardvark was sitting on the ground, still slightly dazed as Fre walked over to the prone goblin. He appeared to not be moving. I caught a slight whisper from her as she crushed the goblin's throat with her boot. "That's for Aardvark."

And so died Stasost Usbunguzo, the elite goblin bowman who couldn't use a bow.

I pulled Aardvark up as he shook his head to clear his vision, before going over to check on the goblin. Fre passed me, concern in her face as she went to check on Aardvark who was slowly coming as well. The goblin was dead. Undeniably so. I was quite relieved it had been so simple.

Turning back around to comment I was shocked to see my two friends bloodspattered with goblin gore but fondly embracing. They kissed. Not the friendly peck on the cheek mind you, but one that appeared quite practiced, and more active. I felt warm and awkward at the same time and felt some strange desire to go to the roof to see if it had started snowing yet. Perhaps it was cooler there.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 09, 2008, 04:37:03 pm**

1st of Granie 1052 Early spring

Only two animals had come with us when we arrived. The ox that had pulled our wagon and a stray two-humped camel we had picked up on our way here. They had been content to be moved indoors and mulled around without purpose for some time. We were all too busy to consider taking them on as a pet, not that I'd want a beast like that as a pet mind you. But today I put the camel to good use. Today marked our one year mark as a settlement. The camel was part of the intended feast. Fre did the honor of butchering and cooking the creature for us, and we rolled several barrels to our new tables and chairs that designated our common area.

We had accomplished much in the first year of our stay here. I said as much in our toasts.

"All right, quiet down.

Thank you.

Now, we're here to commemorate the end of our first year here. Thanks to the intrepid and bold moves of all present the goblin fort known as Omospoxxo is no more. In it's place is now the dwarven hall of Dorenemal, our home!

It is the first holdings officially of our clan now, since each settlement is required to survive the one year mark, officially, before being considered as a holding. The Fahlstrom clan, the Wall of Zeal now has a home!

I wanted to thank you each individually for your contributions. So let's raise our mugs in toast to Mafol and Medtom, our miners, who have cleared this place and made it suitable for dwarves, in addition to providing us access to the wider world. Cheers!

To Steele, our mason. Without him this drafty place would have been unbearable this winter and who busies himself fortifying our new home, inside and out. And who incidentally made these fine tables and chairs for us. Cheers!

To Aardvark, who tirelessly hauled stone, wood and the like without complaint while he waited for us to build him his forges. And who has begun turning out weapons of high quality, both metal and crafts dwarfship as his new axe well attests. Cheers!

To Ragnar who tirelessly hews trees to keep us warm and fuel our forges, and who with equal zeal hews both kobold and goblin, thief and guard alike. Without his skill we well may all have died penniless at the hands of the kobolds. Cheers!

And to Fre last of all, but certainly not least. Without her we likely would have starved thrice over this past year. She who prepared racoon in ways I would not have thought possible and who provided us with the feast now before us. It is her I wish to thank for the slaying of the goblin leader and for her many many talents. Because of that I wish to present her with an item I found atop the third goblin structure. Cheers to her!"

Pulling the flawless fist-sized yellow-green heliodor (masterwork large Heliodor) I handed it to Fre. (Do with it what you would like Fre, put it as a trinket in your room or future tomb (I'll place it and mark it as forbidden) or trade it to some caravan for an item you'd really like. I'll continue to reward the most active and useful dwarves yearly. Additionally you may all feel free to post in character about anything past that has happened. Or any plans you would like to have happen, but no guarantees there. I'm writing this as I play it.)

Needless to say there was a considerable amount of drinking that night. Which was just as well. We had done better this year than I could have possibly hoped for. And while there remained much to do, I felt confident that we could manage it.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 09, 2008, 04:55:12 pm**

17th of Granite ~~Early spring~~ Butt-freezin' Winter

We had our second merchant caravan show up a few days ago. Elves from Lapamanecalo, wherever that is. I wasn't sure what they were doing here. Or why they came, but apparently they sensed profit and braved the snow, forming a line for their mules in the deep snow drifts. At least once they made it to our valley they were relatively safe. I'd heard something about their squemish nature when I was at Kilrudmorul. Apparently the elves had been showing up for years before we ever managed to successfully trade with them there. They kept being offended and leaving for the smallest things. Apparently they didn't like being traded goblin gear made of leather. Apparently killing animals was against their beliefs. Ugh... vegetarians. Just slightly better than goblins if you ask me. Also they refused to trade in weapons. Also pacificts. Their deities must either be very very different from ours or there are some gods up there that are laughing themselves drunk over the elves as a race. In any case, it was a welcome relief from the cold and we had a few things I thought wouldn't offend their sensibilities. We had some wooden crafts I could have sold them but I wasn't sure if that would bother them or not, since I recalled their love of trees as well. In the end I sold them the Nickel-silver earrings the kobold and raccoons had tried to make off with and a few obsidian mechanisms I had made. The earrings went better than I had thought, nearly a thousand ingots. For some earrings a goblin had pilfered years ago probably. In any case we got some berries and flour to supplement our again dwindling food supply. Several barrels of drink, a little funny tasting but strong enough. Some basic supplies like empty barrels, rope, cloth and thread for patching clothes and the like. Oh, and some cages. Ragnar would appreciate that. Sure, they could be used to trap animals to tame and make them into pets like the elves preferred, or they could be used for goblins and combat training like we preferred. In either case we now had three.

Apparently sometime while I was busy trading Ragnar encountered two more kobold thieves trying to sneak their way past him in the forest. He made with the axe and there were two less kobolds in the world. He didn't even bother reporting them until that evening. Ah well, two more copper daggers for our collection. Dorenemal 6 Kobolds 1. I'll probably just have them melted down for the metal.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 09, 2008, 05:07:01 pm**

2nd of Felsite 1052

We had a surprise today. Steele was out working on a defensive wall I'd mapped out when a dwarf popped out and nearly got brained with a masonry trowel. Said he was the first of the new crew he'd brought once he'd heard the place had been cleansed of goblins. Apparently he was one of the original miners that prospected the area and tried to settle here. When word got around that some poor fools had gone out to clear out the goblins he'd gotten his hopes up and begun gathering some friends. When the outpost liaison had returned and given the official report that went public two months later he had jumped on the chance. Several of the poorer class and some of his family and friends had been persuaded by him to make the trek here. He reasoned that if we could defeat the goblins we must have been talented and well-equipped. He was right on the first count at least.

But he had brought with him 21 others, two of which were children, with little more than their tools of trade and the clothes on their backs, relying on our supplies. 22 people total. Oh, and a bloody donkey that was the pet of their cook! I've taken the time to meet with all of them quickly to appraise their talents. Oh, and inform them they'll be sleeping on the floor for a while. I didn't know what we could do but accept them. Half of them are useless, but can be put to useful tasks. I can't help but wonder if some of them are spies sent by Agna to see what we're doing. I'll have to interview them carefully and ask plenty of questions.

Title: **Re: Chronicles of the rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 09, 2008, 05:22:03 pm**

12th of Felsite

I've finally finished meeting with all of the newcomers today. I've had each one swear the customary oath of induction into our clan, but I still have my doubts. The Miner was the only one apparently from his original party that wanted to have anything to do with us. But there were plenty of others. I've noted them below:

- 1 Miner (F)
- 5 Peasant (F) May assign to Road crew or military
- 1 Woodcrafter (M) I've told him stone is more durable and have convinced him to switch to Stonecrafting
- 1 Thresher, 1 Planter (F/M) Useful once we get farms going come the thaw. For now, gathering plants to augment our food supply
- 1 Potash Maker (F) I've made him our new Woodburner... same idea as before
- 1 Gem cutter (M)
- 1 Fish Cleaner (M) Fine come the thaw, mason/engraver for now I think
- 1 Soap Maker (M) we use wet sand to scrub with. I think Aardvark could use a hand at the forges though so he'll be assigned there
- 1 Butcher (M) I'll have to relieve Fre of that duty. She'll probably be glad.
- 1 Lye Maker (M) Same as Soap maker. and same assignment. We'll be getting ore to smelt soon enough
- 1 Glass Maker (F) Great. Now where did I put those designs for the glass kiln?
- 1 Fishery Worker (F) Same as fish cleaner for now
- 1 Bowyer (M) I'll relieve Ragnar of his carpentry responsibilities and make this guy our carpenter. All proper weapons should be iron... but preferably steel.
- 1 Brewer (M)
- 1 Cook (M) + 1 donkey we can't eat but probably should. I'll have to ask Fre where she'd prefer to be assigned.

As a side note while I was talking briefly with the children one of them mentioned that he had seen one of the peasants playing with a gold coin. That didn't seem quite normal to me. Must investigate.

P.S. I've found the peasant the child was talking about, one Rith Nomoddom by name. While he was asleep in the common room I checked his belongings real quick. There was a rather hefty purse in his possession, that looked to be filled with gold coin. Dwarven coin. I'm not quite sure what to do with him. Perhaps I'll speak with Ragnar about it. If this Rith is a spy or plant from Agna no good can come of it, to be sure.

(Anybody that wants to can feel free to claim a dwarf. Genders and basic professions are provided.)

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 09, 2008, 09:56:28 pm**

15th of Felsite

The summer thaw came as predicted this year. Nice to know you can count on nature to run its course. Unfortunately one of our dwarves was out on the ice of a lake when a warm spell hit and he broke through. We tried to rescue him but were unable to do so in time. Rith

Nomoddom has perished by drowning. A regrettable and avoidable loss. Had he decided to listen to me he might have lived. We weren't even able to recover his corpse as of yet, and that created quite a commotion. Few wanted to traverse near the lake where he lay.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 09, 2008, 10:04:23 pm**

12th of Hematite

Work continues well. We've finally got beds for everyone, though were still designated into a common sleeping hall. Once defenses are in place that shall be the first thing that needs to be addressed. Some of us greatly desire privacy, and I know I'm not the only one.

The first human traders arrived today. Unfortunately we're still clearing the path to the existing trade route so the heavier wagons couldn't make it through. Pity, we could certainly have used their goods. I've redoubled the manpower on those projects. Hopefully they'll be ready by fall when I expect the dwarven caravan to come.

Still, as the dwarves predicted last year the humans were more than happy to trade for slightly used goblin equipment and we were able to obtain several good ropes, barrels, some cloth and leather but most importantly... food. Mostly seafood and cheese, though some drink was to be had. And all for gear we bled little for. Very handy not to have to spare the labor for craftsmen.

Our newest gemcutter appears to be taken by some strange secretive mood. He abandoned his work and went to the common area where he began muttering to himself and making drawings. I've seen such things happen before and thankfully knew to try building some workshops for him. Being a gemcutter I figured making a workshop for such things would be sufficient. Once built he quickly claimed it and began demanding uncut gems. I've got our miners working on it now.

PS

While the humans were yet with us Fre came across a kobold trying to sneak it's way in. She dealt with it in true dwarf fashion. By pummeling it to death. I've heard some complaints about the vermin and pests, particularly around the garbage dump. Perhaps I shall have to move it to a more discrete and enclosed area.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2008, 11:22:19 am**

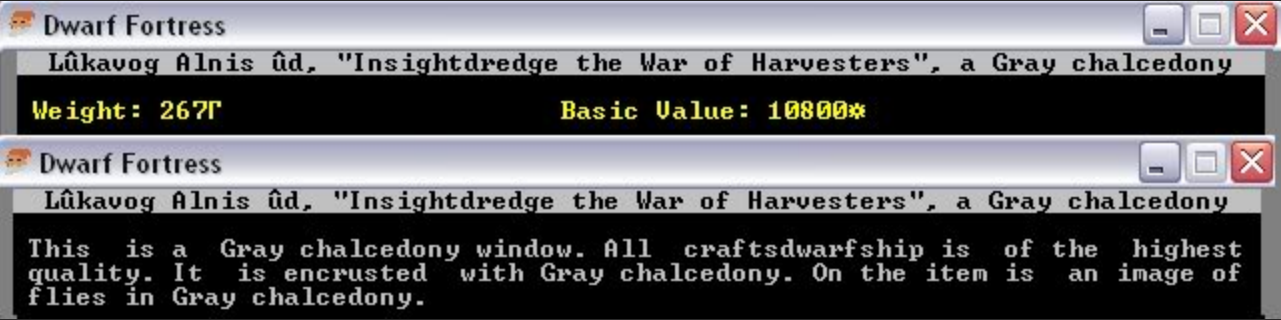
14th of Malachite

Our gemcutter began working on some so-called magnificent construction of his own design a few days ago and already finished. I'm impressed with his speed and efficiency but his design skills could use some work.

Our miners had managed to remove some nice deposits of Grey chalcedony which he used to make an artifact window. He's named it Lukavog Alnis Ud, which is quite a mouthful even for me. It's named Insightdredge the war of Harvesters. I wondered at first what he meant by it since we haven't even planted farms yet, technically. He assured me it was referring to the war between us and the goblins and that their souls had been harvested fully. To comemorate said reaping he engraved an image of the scene on the window. I looked at it but didn't see any engraving until my nose was mere inches from the pane.

Right there in excrutiatingly minute detail were dozens of flies engraved on the artifact window.

In all fairness I suppose he did arrive right as all the goblin corpses and kobolds were rotting away. I'll have to get that garbage dump built here before too long. I don't want a fly being declared our fort mascot.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2008, 11:29:33 am**

25th of Malachite

I've finally finished meeting with the human guild liason. Apparently he slipped into the half-drained pond that Rith the spy perished in and was stuck up to his waist in muddy water next to a corpse for nearly a week. Lucky for him he had a pack with food with him. Lucky for us it was his own fault and he wasn't too mad at us.

In any case we know what they'll trade the best for. Food (which isn't going to happen), cloth, windows (I wondered briefly if we could foist Lukavog off on them, but I didn't want to start a riot amongst ourselves), and spears. Perhaps we could accomodate them on the spears. And maybe even the cloth. The elves tended to arrive once the heavy winter storms let up. We could get cloth from them and resell it to the humans. I'll have to look into that.

In better news, our farms are now fully functional. I've connected the door to the upper lake to a lever so we can refill our pond from below, and a second door will flood the food chambers with fresh mud from time to time.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2008, 03:06:48 pm**

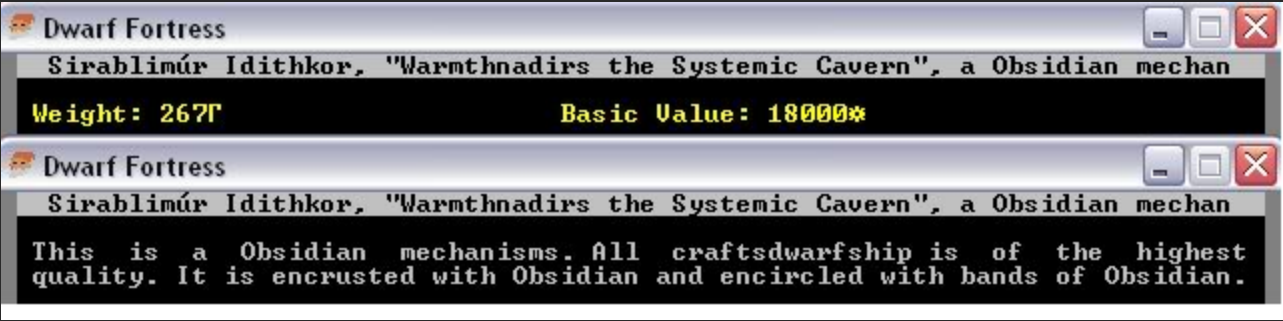
15th of Limestone Autumn 1052

Half the fortress was out working in the rare sunshine when the dwarven caravan arrived, our liason Vabok with them. The masons were working on the defensive wall that would limit passage to those visiting us. The road crew of peasants were doing good work as well. Ragnar was busy ensuring that no trees grew in the pathway and so we were glad to have the caravan show up at such an opportune time. They were even able to bring wagons! I was a little dissappointed at their showing however. Only one wagon of material.

As soon as they showed up I began designating items to be brought to the trade post. And though the merchants were in a hurry again, they waited long enough for us to get what we needed to barter with them. While the others were bringing up the supplies to trade I got some brilliant insight into what our mountainhome needed. It needed vision, a goal to achieve. We could achieve perfection as a group. Our home would be perfectly organized. With these thoughts in mind I began imagining things as they should be, our home extending into the roots of the mountain itself, carved out of living stone. I saw paved roads leading all directions. A place of safety and refuge for those lost or seeking such places. I saw vast workshops filled with skilled crafts dwarves. A resplendant dining room complete with waterfalls. Impenetrable walls and strong defenses, siege engines and a military clad in quality steel armor and weapons. Those were my visions. I needed a symbol for that though. Something that would inspire our clan to strive for that vision. Something that would represent our efforts. The dwarven heart, stone and metal and fire and blood. A perfect machine.

I had an idea. One that penetrated my being. That made me rush down to my workshop. My workshop. I began furiously working on the image in my mind. Gathering the supplies I needed. The stone that we won by blood. This would be the heart of our fortress.

When it was finished I sat exhausted on a workbench next to my creation. It was indeed flawless, smooth, black and shimmering slightly in the dim lighting. I named it Sirablimúr Idithkor, the wellspring of warmth of the systematic cavern, or Warmthnadirs the Systematic Cavern. It would be the heart of our home, the guiding vision.



I needed a drink.

I'd been working for five days without even realizing it and the merchants were getting eager to leave. I'd better get above and see what happened in my absence.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2008, 03:18:39 pm**

26th of Limestone Mid-autumn 1052

Trading went well with the merchants. They were unable to bring more supplies or so they said. When the head merchant told me this I noticed a satisfied smirk on one of the other merchants there and some shaking of heads on the part of their guards. I would have to look into this. Still they brought us some of the goods we had requested. Lots of metal bars. It should give us plenty to do once we get fully functional metalworks running. They thankfully also brought plenty of drink. Rum, ale, wine and beer. That should make everyone happy. Unfortunately they brought almost no food. A few turtles that looked like they had been caught recently. And some seeds. But little else.

They took all of the trinkets and craftsgoods we had, and plenty of goblin equipment. They wanted more than we gave them, but after having spoken with the humans about their values I knew now what I was dealing with. We kept most of our best pieces and told them if they wanted them they'd have to bring more next year. They grumbled at this but didn't have much choice.

During our negotiations we were surprised by the alarm that was sounded. One of the merchant caravan guards had spotted a goblin sneaking in and shot it dead. The corpse of a second one was found seconds later lying perforated and bleeding near the entrance to our fort, not twenty yards from where we were bartering. Nice to know the obsidian weapon traps worked. Not only kobold thieves now, but goblin thieves as well. They must have gotten word we were here. That was not good news.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2008, 03:31:13 pm**

26th of Limestone Mid-Autumn

The merchants had just informed me they would be heading out soon before the snows came when the alarm was sounded to the east. A group of goblins had arrived on the road. I immeadiately ordered Fre, Ragnar and Aardvark to gear up and guard near the entrance while I went to check things out from the roof of the neighboring building. (We've opened up a shaft to it underground.)

Things looked bleak when I got up there. Medtom and Mafol had been working on cleaning up a cliff next to the road and had apparently been surprised by the group. An axegoblin and four hammergoblins. Our miners led them on a merry little chase before splitting up, Medtom heading back towards our entrance where Fre, Aardvark and Ragnar were. Mafol unfortunately heading the other direction, to the cliffs where he might be trapped.

The Axegoblin had been in hot pursuit of Mafol and had nearly cornered him when Mafol turned and with a fierce look engaged the goblin. He blocked a shot or two before putting his pick through the goblin's legs. That slowed the axegoblin down. The hammergoblins seemed hesitant to take up the chase after that though. It seems they weren't expecting a fight. Mafol ran them in a small circle and in his departure from the cliffs took another shot at the axegoblin who was still prone, smashing the goblins hands making him drop his weapon. Mafol then began running back towards the entrance.

It seems the leader was the axegoblin and he apparently decided he had seen enough. He fled the area and the two hammergoblins near him went with them. The other two hammergoblins seeing themselves outnumbered tried to run as well. One was cut down near the corner of the north building by Aardvark, the other made it as far as the cliffs before being surprised by Mafol who was heading back. He stopped long enough for Ragnar to cleave him in two from behind.

The merchants seemed somewhat taken aback by the attack and counter-attack and left in a hurry after that and without speaking to us.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2008, 04:08:43 pm**

25th of Sandstone ~~Mid-Autumn~~ Early winter

My meeting with Vabok went well. He congratulated my on all our work. Said the place was coming along well, beginning to look like a real mountainhome already. It was an interesting conversation.

"Ah, Paulus. Yes, good to see you again. Well, my report last year was received with mixed feelings. It seems the initial report generated some shock. It seems that," he gave me a small wink "the King's advisor Agna nearly burst a vessel in his forehead when I told him you were all still alive and hadn't suffered a single death. He also said my appraisal was worthless because the structures I'd appraised weren't made by you but rather were goblin built. Seems to me that this one has been refitted quite nicely, though it still needs work."

I didn't know quite what to say. That Agna had his hand in things appeared to be without a doubt. I let Vabok continue.

"Now, he's put my reputation on the line because he said you wouldn't be able to produce anything worthwhile, nor be able to hold the place against any goblin incursion. I'll claim otherwise of course. Seeing the defensive wall you've erected and other preparations you've made maybe it's time I made a wager with old Agna. In any case, keep up the good work. I've evaluated this place again for soundness as a clan holding and will submit my report when I get back. I've brought the forms to officially make this a holding of the Fahlstrom clan, the Wall of Zeal. Once it takes effect it will be retroactive to the beginning of your second year, and all immigrants will officially be recorded as pertaining to the Wall of Zeal. Now, how has the last year gone? Any occurrences I should be aware of? I've already made note of the goblin patrol that showed up while I was here."

"No, it's been a strangely quiet year. We've gotten much done. We did recieve twenty two immigrants in mid-winter this past year. They were half-frozen when they'd arrived but they're doing well enough now."

"Twenty-two you say? that'd bring your head-count to twenty-nine" Vabok mentions as he records a quick note muttering to himself
"Seems like a large number to come so quickly and in the middle of winter. Usually it takes a bit longer once the report is made public."

Of course with the fiasco your report made I'm not too surprised."

"What do you mean fiasco?"

"Well, my initial report was filed with the outpost office that makes it public after one month. The outpost office posted my original report as I provided it. But within days it had been removed and modified, stating your value as nearly negligible and the area as infested with goblins. It caused quite a disturbance at the outpost office, the head liason went to see the King himself about it. But apparently Agna convinced the King that he was right and the altered report stayed."

"Ah, well, you win some you lose some. We did have one death though. A peasant by the name of Rith Nomoddom."

"Hmm. Cause of death?"

"Drowning. He broke through the ice and we were unable to save him in time."

"Unfortunate. What steps have been taken since then?"

"We've drained that particular lake. In part to recover the corpse, which was buried with his possessions in a proper coffin."

"Very well, anything else to report?"

"Not this year. Is it possible for me to send a message to my brothers in Kilrudmorul?"

"I'd ask the merchants about that, I'm not headed out that way. If there is nothing else I should go, I'm looking forward to delivering this report when I get back to Sazirgeb."

The meeting went well. And was reasonably informative. Agna had been causing problems for us back in the mountainhomes. There were reports of goblin raids on settlements and mountainhomes all up and down the range, but they were mostly minor. Rumors of some human settlements being torched by goblins had been received but not confirmed as of yet.

Oh, and the merchants wanted weapons for this next year. Specifically Crossbows, shortswords and battleaxes. Leather and hides for armor and the usual trinkets that were in style. This year it was amulets, idols and crowns. Some other items made the list but weren't significant.

PS

As Vabok was leaving a small ragtag band of immigrants came in on the road. Only seven of them. It looked as though Agna's alterations had worked. It was for the best I suppose. We didn't have that many supplies. A quick count for now, I'll interview them all later:

- 1 woodworker/carpenter/woodcutter F
- 1 Fish Dissector F I'll probably ask her to train as a mason/engraver
- 1 Peasant M Newest road crew addition
- 1 Milker M Milk what? New farmer
- 1 Gem setter F
- 1 Wood Burner F
- 1 Engraver M I'll have him double as a mason too

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2008, 04:14:06 pm**

29th of Sandstone 1052

I've finished interviewing the new arrivals. It appears that their treatment as they prepared to depart wasn't exactly friendly. Thikut the woodworker had even had his steel axe forcibly removed by a squad of Royal guard. The others had been roughed up, and twelve had turned back at the treatment. The remaining seven had been forced out of the mountainhome by the same squad of soldiers with barely enough supplies for the trip. Thankfully for them the weather had been mild. Thikut informed me that he suspected all future immigrants would be discouraged from coming here.

I wasn't sure there was much we could do about it.

That night I gathered as many as could to a meeting in our common room.

"Evening everyone. Thank you for coming. I realize I've been remiss in setting gatherings. I wanted to welcome all of the newcomers to Dorenemal. I'd encourage everyone to get to know them and what happened on their way here. They are now part of us, a part of clan Fahlstrom and the Wall of Zeal. We must work together here or we will fail. We have many enemies, the most obvious of which are the goblins that now know about our presence here. They cannot be happy that we have taken their fortress and will likely take steps to try to recover it.

I'd like to thank the road crew for the excellent work in getting a road east built before winter, and the masons for getting our defensive wall built as well. That means we can focus inward for most of the winter. I'm aware of the travesty of a common room we have and had designated accomodations for all of us below the foundations of this fort we now call our own. I wanted to present to you all a creation of mine, Sirablimur Idithkor, the perfect mechanism. This simple mechanism is representative of us, of the perfection we can achieve. It, like us all, can be used for destruction or beneficence. I'd encourage all of you to take the call to perfection to heart. I will do my best to ensure the continued organization of this settlement we've carved out.

There are forces at work against us, but we can and will prevail. So here's to all your hard work!"

The crowd was mostly silent during this speech, except for the part about accomodations being made where there were relieved faces and some cheers. Mostly I believe it gave them much to think about. It would be a cold winter, but we would be spending most of it indoors.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2008, 05:04:01 pm**

7th of Obsidian Late Winter

Things have run smoothly this winter. I've asked the Masons to brave the weather to begin construction on a second roof above where we now conduct much of our business. With the fortifications the goblins made on all walls the old roof could never be habitible but a second roof will keep the snow off. That and we need to clear out some of this stone that is clogging our work areas.

One of our road crew, a peasant by the name of Edzul appeared to fall prey to too much time indoors. He began giggling and singing in prose and composing poetry. Oh, and he's taken over a masons workshop. I don't know why, he certainly hasn't done more than the odd masonry job since he's been here, but there you have it. Perhaps he's taken my words to heart.

PS It's now the 12th of Obsidian and Edvard has finished his work. It's splendid, and much in line with my own work. Of course, obsidian is almost all we have to work with around here at the moment. He calls it Sakrithkadol, or Blazeshatchet. It's a beautiful cabinet, truly magnificent. I'm not sure why he engraved willows on the doors of it, he said that's what felt right. Then he giggled and skipped away.

Dwarf Fortress

Sákrithkadol, "Blazeshatchet", a Obsidian cabinet

Weight: 667fBasic Value: 14400*

Dwarf Fortress

Sákrithkadol, "Blazeshatchet", a Obsidian cabinet

This is a Obsidian cabinet. All crafts dwarfship is of the highest quality. It is encrusted with Obsidian and encircled with bands of Obsidian. On the item is an image of Willows in Obsidian.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2008, 05:34:52 pm**

1st of Granite 1053

We've been here for two years now. I've taken survey of our settlement. And we're set to have a big party come evening. We've rolled out at least one keg of every kind of alcohol we have, and two of the good stuff. Tonight we honor Mafol for his heroic efforts defending himself against the goblin-kind, and for his tireless efforts to expand our settlement here. I'll be rewarding both Mafol and Medtom with brand new Steel picks. They do almost everything together now. It's strange how adversity brings people closer together.

Dwarf Fortress

Hamlet Dorenemal, "Diamondsense"1st Granite, 1053, Early Spring

AnimalsKitchenStoneStocksJustice

Created Wealth: 333000*?Population: 35

Weapons: 8070*Miners 3Deadwarves None

Armor and Garb: 32520*?Woodworkers 3Axe Lords None

Furniture: 30440*?Stoneworkers 4Swordsdwarves None

Other Objects: 53730*?Rangers NoneSwordmasters None

Architecture: 194800*?Metalsmiths 1Macedwarves None

Displayed: 12870*?Jewelers 2Mace Lords None

Held/Worn: 600*Craftsdwarves 2Hammerdwarves None

Imported Wealth: 137081*Nobles/Admins NoneHammer Lords None

Exported Wealth: 4004*Peasants 4Speardwarves None

Food Stores: 570?Children 2Spearmasters None

Meat NoneSeeds 320?Fleberg Workers 2Marksdwarves None

Fish NoneDrink 100?Farmers 11Elite Mrksdwrs None

Plant 39Other 110?Engineers 1Wrestlers None

Other Animals A NoneElite Wrestlers None

Recruits None

Dwarf Fortress

PAUSED

'Ragnar' Shakethkivish Ritholarek Rur, "'Ragnar' Torridlancers the Noble C

'Ragnar' Shakethkivish Ritholarek Rur has been ecstatic lately. She talked with a friend lately. She made a friend recently. She slept without a proper room recently. She was caught in a snow storm recently. She admired a fine Bed lately. She has been satisfied at work lately. She is a worshipper of Litast Bristleinks. She is the leader of The Walls of Zeal. She is an enemy of The Spider of Unions. She is an enemy of The United Wraith. She is a citizen of The Big Knives. She is a member of The Walls of Zeal. 'Ragnar' Shakethkivish Ritholarek Rur likes Graphite, Nickel silver, Lapis lazuli, green glass, angelshark leather, the color lime, crescents, bolts, high boots, large gems, donkeys for their stubbornness and fairies for their babylike giggles. When possible, she prefers to consume Sewer brew. She has a calm demeanor. She doesn't handle stress well. She is very friendly. She tends not to openly express emotions. She is uncomfortable with change. She dislikes intellectual discussions. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather. She doesn't really care about anything anymore.

Dwarf Fortress

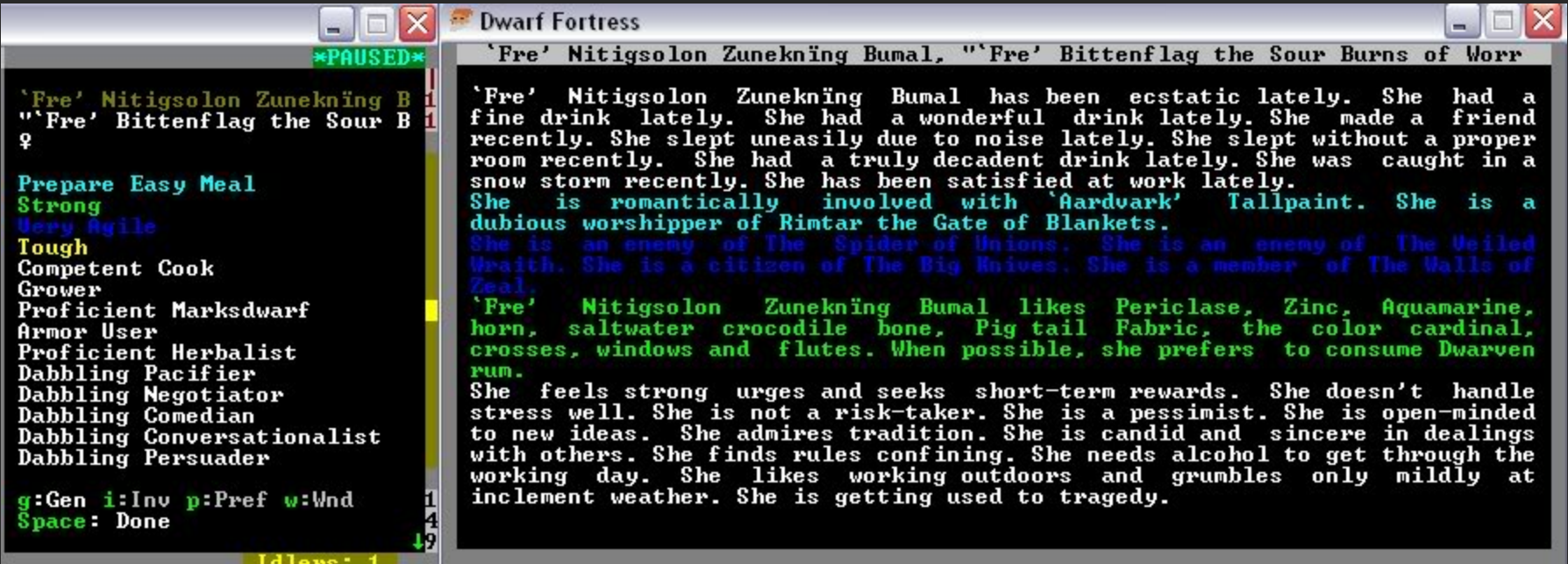
PAUSED

'Steele' Rallecad, "'Steele' Silvercleans", Mason

'Steele' Rallecad has been happy lately. He slept uneasily due to noise lately. He has complained of thirst lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He talked with a friend lately. He admired a fine Furnace lately. He was caught in a snow storm recently. He has been satisfied at work lately. He is a worshipper of Fimshel. He is a citizen of The Big Knives. He is a member of The Walls of Zeal. 'Steele' Rallecad likes Shale, Nickel, Clear diamond, whale leather, high boots and horses for their strength. When possible, he prefers to consume Quarry bush Leaves. He is quick to anger. He is somewhat reserved. He is confident. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.



((Aardvark is near the entrance to our main building here. You can see the road leading to it, the ramp leading to the upper plateau is cut into the cliff off the upper left of the screen. The trading post is off the lower left of the screen. I've got a place for ballistae set up lower mid screen. One row of weapon traps, one row of cage traps as per requests. For traps I think that's about all I do. I don't want to make this too easy come combat. As a note... Fre you've got yourself a title now, as does Ragnar.))



((If there is anything else to see let me know. At this point the initial rush of labor is done and we're cleaning up the settlement. If you have any requests feel free to make them. If you want your character cross-trained in something else that's fine. Please post such requests in character. Again, feel free to make any posts in character that you'd like as long as they're generally non-plot-line posts. Anybody else that would like to join in is welcome, I've got plenty to choose from and will begin organizing my military here shortly as our road is now complete and I've no use for peasants. ;))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **DarkMagnus** on **July 10, 2008, 09:35:39 pm**

(Could I get Ragnar's full title please? Also nice to see he doesn't really care about anything anymore. We can just pretend 'anything' means kobold/goblin lives.)

Ragnar requests, after a helping of Sewer Brew, to be allowed time for training and, when necessary, the position of Sheriff. "Gimme a season t' work a pump t' build up me stamina. Then it's time fer me t' train. I'll be the finest Axedwarf ye kin find, on me honor."

(Ragnar really needs Toughness before he starts sparring or he'll likely get a spine/neck injury. Hopefully a season or two of Pump Operating will fix that. Then he can be a great candidate for Captain.)

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 11, 2008, 12:35:29 pm**

2nd of Slate Winter also known as early spring

The last two weeks have been very busy. Just today one of our farmers caught a kobold trying to sneak in. He pounced on him and managed to bet the thief down, but was injured in the process. Mostly just superficial bruising, but he did get a nasty cut on his upper right arm. We've got him in bed recovering. Hopefully he'll pull through. Thob's a good dwarf and losing a farmer would hurt our

burgeoning food production capabilities.

Things really got started about two weeks ago when the elven caravans arrived. I'm hoping it was just that they were followed rather than other potential considerations. The elves settled in to trade. Their disapproving stares met us on all sides, even though our trading post was now indoors out of the snow. Apparently they disapprove of open warfare, haven't liked it for decades now. From the stories they can be fierce fighters though. Maybe it's just their merchants that've gone soft.

It wasn't long after they showed up that we lost Thikut, one of our road crew helping out the woodcutters on the upper plateau. He was jumped by a goblin patrol. The goblin leader had a crossbow, the others goblin shortbows. I'm sure they at least knew how to use bows. Poor Thikut was so feathered he looked like a porcupine. Erush was also up helping since Fre was in the kitchens taking her shift. He froze up on the cliffs and nearly died himself. When the arrows started whizzing by he jumped down the ramp and made for the fort, shouting the whole way, goblins in close pursuit. At least he had the presence of mind to hop over the weapon traps. His donkey, Minkot, and as stubborn of an ass as I've ever seen didn't know what to make of it and stayed outside. After the first goblin got skewered by the weapon traps the others feathered the donkey from range and he too fell.

There were five goblins, and only five weapon traps. After the next two goblins tried taking a different route to avoid the first goblins corpse and died in the same manner the other two looked somewhat hesitant to proceed into the fort. I'm sure I could see their reasoning. Three corpses lay in front of them. there were only two spaces that were clear of their comrades and a dwarf had just gotten by. It must have made sense to press on, but when Aardvark stuck his head around the wall where he, Ragnar and Fre had assembled that must have settled it. Aardvark nearly took an arrow in the head but managed to deflect it with his shield at the last second and the goblins came howling after him, stepping into the two remaining traps. Five traps. Five goblin archers dead. We must have been blessed by the god of simple mathematics.

Of course all this was in view of the elves in the trading post. Perhaps I should have something built to protect traders.

After everyone stood down we began cleaning up the mess and I headed over to begin negotiations when the alarm was sounded again. A second goblin ambush! It was one of our fisherdwarves that spotted the thing. She was clearing the corpses of the first goblins when she looked up and not five feet away was a live goblin, carrying a wicked looking scimitar and grinning at the unarmed and unarmored dwarf. She did what was best I must say. She ran.

The goblin did what was expected and gave immeadiate pursuit, stepping on the same trap that had just been cleared by the dwarf he was chasing. He died instantly, impaled from below by half a dozen razorsharp blades. The other goblins behind him seeing their leader impaled so and the other goblin corpses forming a neat wall in front of them decided it was in their best interests to flee. Which they did.

Again, in full view of the elves who so disliked bloodshed. Some of them looked a little pale. In the end we still made a deal, but since we had little to trade I didn't get as much as I would have liked. We got food and some drink but little else. The only things we had to offer them were the coins we had found in this place to begin with and some furniture. I made sure it was our inferior furniture too. Ah well. A little more food was nice. Though the biscuits that Fre has been making are quite tasty. She calls them her little seed cakes. I guess they'll do. I think I prefer the wild strawberry seedcakes, the ratweed ones I just find a little disturbing. Must be the name.

We've tunneled through to the second building from the third floor down of ours and have begun using it as a tomb of sorts for the fallen. Thikut was buried there in an obsidian coffin, as was Erush's donkey. The poor fellow is heartbroken about it. I've given him the first room completed in the first lower level to try to take his mind off of it. Perhaps his own room will help him work through his grief in private.

Ragnar spoke with me the other day about organizing a military. I must say I agree with him. Any larger scale incursion will overrun the traps leaving us exposed. Aardvark has already completed two full sets of full steel plate and is working on more so the time is right. I'll have to see about clearing the first floor down for use by the military.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 11, 2008, 03:02:13 pm**

25th of Slate

We heralded another group of migrants today and I received quite a surprise from them. In the lead I recognized both Urvad Nethmebzuth and her husband Iteb. I wondered what they were doing here and leading such a ragtag group of migrants and I soon found out.

It was no wonder I saw quite a few faces among the group I recognized. They all looked tired and very worn. And hungry. They must have made the trek from Kilrudmorul. I wanted to know why.

I met with Urvad last, wanting to assess the group first in an unbiased fashion. There were twenty of them in all and two pets. One horse and one donkey. We didn't have a good record on keeping animals alive here.

- 1 Stonecrafter
- 1 Bonecrafter (Both just what we needed)
- 1 Bowyer now woodcutter
- 2 Furnace operators I'll have to get more smelters and forges going here soon
- 1 Jewler I requested he take up sewing. We had cloth and could put it to use.
- 4 Peasants Drafted. One of which was Iteb, Urvad's husband. He'll make a fine Fortress guard.
- 1 child of theirs
- 1 Cook Now farmer
- 1 Stoneworker
- Urvad herself, the only escort they could spare but a talented enough axedwarf
- 1 Metal crafter We'll put him to good use
- 1 Tanner doubling as leatherworker too now
- 1 Metalsmith
- 1 Woodburner now Woodcutter as well
- 1 Potash maker I've asked to take up stonecrafting
- and 1 more Fish cleaner I've asked to take up Masonry when the water is all frozen.

As a side note according to charter rules we now are officially a village so that evening we got together and voted on who would be Mayor. Ragnar was chosen, and I must say I approve. I know he'll be dissapointed he won't get to be sheriff but that's the vote. Perhaps in the future that will change. He's fierce looking though and frequently wears a scowl. And well known to many of the newcomers from Kilrudmorul and obviously well liked by those living here already. He's even been given a fancy title, Ragnar Shakethkivish Ritholarek Rur. It's almost a joke around here at how fast he's converted goblins to running away from him. The title means Ragnar Torridlancers The Noble Church of Running. Even I find it somewhat amusing. He's a good choice, though I fear he may chafe a bit. He merely nodded and said his first act as mayor was to ensure we had better defenses. He ordered some bolts made. Or else. No one argued. Yup... he'll make a very effective motivator.

Urvad herself brought somewhat distressing news. Kilrudmorul had been under siege by the westerly goblins again, under new leadership. That hadn't been the problem but a goblin had snuck in and made off with the Duke's newborn son. The Duke's consort died trying to protect it. The Duke had been so griefstricken by his loss that he simply refused to eat or drink until he died. It had been a severe blow to morale there as he had been well liked and respected. The new Dutchess had arrived to take over within two months, and by all accounts had been ... let's just say bad. She'd ordered goods made with Bismuth. No one makes stuff with Bismuth, it's simply too brittle to craft things out of. Someone tried to explain it to her but when she couldn't have her way she had him beaten to death. A few months later she tried again. The next metalcrafter that failed was locked in jail for 100 days where he starved to death. It went on like that. Her consort was just as bad. Wanted stuff made out of silver every month. The craftsdwarves quickly ran out and had to resort to melting existing goods down to use the silver to make new ones he hadn't seen yet.

She'd taken over with a fist of iron, her directive to do so approved by the king himself and undersigned by his counsellor Agna. And then

mysteriously during the siege someone sabotaged the place. There was a nearby underground lake that only a few knew about. It had been found and promptly walled off. All sorts of undesirable creatures lurked there and it had posed a threat to the mines. But someone had breached it in another location in the middle of the night. Kilrudmorul had been flooded from the inside, submerging all the lower levels and mines. 5 dwarves died and all the animals that were chained near the kennels. All the horses, cows and puppies in training. It was a devastating blow to morale. Most of the quarters had been flooded and half the city was unusable. The dutchess merely drafted a dozen or so people, two of my brothers, Tony and Scott among them, and sent them to the capital to join the King's army. They'd not heard word since. When that population reduction wasn't sufficient she'd sent this group off back to the capital for resettlement.

They'd heard word of Dorenemal of course. Word had quickly spread of this place, especially amongst our old friends. Rather than return to the capiatal they'd simply come here, hoping we'd have room for them. I wouldn't dream of turning them away. This place was no Kilrudmorul, but we're better than some random hovel of a settlement out in the accursed tundra. I've no doubt that's where many of my father's old friends would have been assigned. Disturbing news indeed.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 11, 2008, 06:26:52 pm**

9th of Hematite Autumn

The rumble of wagons approaching echoed through the canyons we called home and warmed my heart more then the patchy weak sunshine could ever hope to. I was glad to see the humans, to be honest. They'd been fair traders with us so far and this was the first they'd seen of the now sheltered trading post we'd set up for them. Abba Hinerdesa was sitting on the lead wagon next to her driver and waving at me as she pulled in. In all they had three wagons and a few pack mules. The wagons didn't look particularly full, but we could use all the supplies we could get.

Greeting her with a handshake as she stepped down I grinned:

"You're a sight for sore eyes even if ye are a human Abba. Tell me what's going on in the world while we start hauling stuff up to trade with."

She grinned and blushed "Ah, um, thank you Paulus. I see you're hale and hearty and this place is running well still. You've made improvements. I like it. It'll be nice to go to a place that believes in trading indoors instead of out in the open. I'm sorry we couldn't bring more but the goblin raids have been hard on the routes. We've lost a wagon or two and some mules on our trip already and we've still a few months to go. Speaking of goblins, I've got a letter here for you. Said he was your brother. We were ambushed in the passes by two groups of goblins and were trying to fend them off when a dwarven patrol charged in from the side. Together we carried the day, but only just. I'm sorry for your loss Paulus. I'll let you read that while we get unpacked."

I wasn't sure what to say as I took the letter and retired to my chair a floor down. My office didn't have walls, but it gave me a place to sit where I could write on my lap. Unfolding it I read Scotts crude but legible hand.

"
Paulus

Hope this finds you well in Dorenemal. Things aren't well at home. Tony and I were drafted by that thrice be-damned Dutchess, may Armok drink her blood from a goblet I'll make with my own hands. She's destroying Kilrudmorul. And all memory of our father Atun. The lower halls where the tombs and his mausoleum were are flooded. And she's had entire walls removed that mentioned him. She's desecrating the place. Had she not still had Tarin to torment after we were drafted I'd be glad to be rid of her.

I assume the human delivered the letter if you're reading this. The twelve of us she conscripted to serve in the King's army had set out two weeks prior to us coming upon them being attacked. The Dutchess sent us out with piecemeal copper gear that had been discarded by the old fortress guard. We'd probably have even helped elves against the goblins, but Tony led the charge. If it hadn't been for him things would have gone much worse. A squad of goblin crossbows had the merchants pinned behind the wagons. Two had been set aflame by a swordgoblin group from behind. Tony charged the crossbows on the hill screaming and shouting like some maniac and we all followed. The goblins didn't see us coming until we were across the road and on the uphill but things got bad after that. Tony managed to deflect a few bolts before taking one in the leg. He fell just feet away. The rest of us washed over the goblins like a crimson tide while the humans fended the other group off until we could come in from behind and mop up. By the time everything was over we'd lost four of our own. Tony had bled to death from a bolt in the chest. I wanted to be the one to tell you. He died well and was put to rest beside the others in a stone cairn off the road a few hundred paces.

Talking with the humans later I found out they had met you previously and were headed to Dorenemal eventually. I passed them this letter. We're headed to the Sazirgeb, and from there probably south to where I hear the action is. To hear tell there's been a lot of goblin activity of late and some of the southern settlements were wiped out. So take care to watch for enemies within and without.

Hope this finds ye well, and to hear from you soon.

Scott Fahlstrom, the Walls of Zeal!

May Atun be forever praised.
"

It was a long letter for Scott. I knew he favored action over words, same as Tony. Tarin on the other hand... I hoped he was all right. I sighed with a heavy heart as I walked over to my chair to think.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 11, 2008, 07:00:36 pm**

20th of Hematite

I hadn't had much time to grieve, but I do feel somewhat better now that I've vented on some of the greenskins personally. True to fashion a goblin thief was found impaled on our traps a few days after Abba and her crew arrived. Where one was more were sure to follow. I should have followed the voice in my head that told me to nor let too many stray far from the fortress. As it was Ragnar and his crew had just finished clearing the timber on the upper plateau and the haulers were bringing down the logs when Thikut, one of Ragnar's cutting crew spotted a goblin patrol. A goblin guard and five crossbowgoblins. One of them saw him and the lot began firing. It's a miracle Thikut survived. He dove behind a boulder after getting hit in the arm and they must have thought him dead, as they didn't pursue. Our gemsetter Rakust was behind Thikut and too a bolt through the leg and went down too. They headed down the ramp as the alarm was passed and dwarves scrambled for cover. Fre, Aardvark and the two new recruits Fath and Udil. took up posts behind the entry walls while I went to try and assure Abba and her crew they should stay put.

Nothing lures a goblin like the sight of fleeing dwarves. I'd installed a row of obsidian traps on the ramp leading to the upper plateau which caught half of them. The leader and two archers approached the entrance warily but after seeing only the fleeing backside of our newly elected mayor, the planter Thob Thobegul, they pressed on and ran into the other traps. Two were killed and one caught in a cage.

We had just gotten Thikut in bed and Medtob had gone to get Rakust when a second ambush patrol came upon us from the east. A group of hammergoblins. Mafol and Celob, a farmer were carrying dead goblins when the second group sprung. Celob ran but Mafol dropped the body and pulled out his pick. The goblin and he squared off for a second before the goblin charged, Mafol got a hit in knocking it breathless but the two collided and were stunned briefly. I ordered Fre, Aardvark and the recruits to the T in our road to cover Mafol and prevent those on the cliffs from being cut off. In seconds Mafol had shrugged of his surprise and began treating the goblin like a wall. The goblin didn't stand a chance.

It was then that shouts rang out from the ramp. A third group of goblins had come to join the ambush! Another group of five

hammergoblins and a macegoblin began pouring down the ramp from the west. They trapped Steele on the ramp and though he put up a fight they outnumbered him four to one and he was slain. Our brewer was likewise trapped on the ramp and tried to run but only made the height of the upper plateau before he was overtaken. He too put up a struggle, Medtob rushing to his aid but arriving seconds too late as the goblin squad leader and two hammergoblins crushed the life out of him.

Things looked grim, and I scooped up an obsidian shortsword and ran to help. Fre was sending bolt after bolt into the group arriving from the east as I approached. Three goblins were coming down the ramp towards us from the west and Medtob was trapped on the upper plateau facing three goblins by herself. Seeing us flanked below them the three on the ramp must have thought we'd make easy prey and approached but their determination wavered as one of them was torn apart the the remaining weapon trap on the ramp. Mafol rushed one of the others and engaged it.

I glanced over my shoulder at the goblins approaching from the east. They were running! Fre must have gotten their leader in her zeal. I called to Udib to stand ground here and provide cover for Fre as Aardvark, Fath and I charged up the ramp to help Medtob. A bolt whizzed by my ear as I ran up towards the remaining hammergoblin, and red blossomed on it's leg as it stumbled in front of me. That was enough for me to catch it by surprise and I thrust up and through the goblin catching it just below the gut and sinking my blade into it to the hilt. Then the goblin was flying through the air and landed above me, dying. A quick stroke to the neck as I ran past ended it's life.

I could hear Aardvark and Fath running up the ramp behind me just a little ways. As I crested onto the upper plateau I was amazed to see Medtob still battling the goblins. And holding her own quite well. Two of the goblins were slightly injured, a third was on the ground in worse condition but still struggling. Medtob herself had a nasty gash on her arm but otherwise seemed ok. I took the opportunity of my unexpected approach to charge the goblin that was prone and even up the fight. A stab and kick sent the goblin ten feet, passed out, and a quick follow up slash ended it's life too. I turned to see the other hammergoblin tackle Medtob and stun her, and hoped she could hold out as I charged the goblin from one side and Fath from the other. Medtob fended off the attacks of the goblin leader, a guard, while Fath and I double teamed the other. My first swipe cleanly severed it's right hand as Fath cuts into it with his steel battle axe from the other side, severing a leg and foot in the first swing. I'm pretty sure the goblin passed out at this point, but Fath and I needed to make sure. A few more swings saw it's remaining limbs join the other ones.

Medtob was fending off the attacks of the guard admirably while Aardvark came up from behind and crushed it's spine with two mighty blows. All of us stood there panting slightly in the cool air for a bit. Aardvark helped Medtob up and we called off the alarm. Not long had passed, we were still clearing the bodies when Cilob spotted another group of goblins that had approached unnoticed from the east. Thankfully we still had Aardvark, Fath and Udil posted at the intersection of roads and they made short work of the goblin lasher. At one point it had tried to run away before changing it's mind and doubling back to tackle Udil, but with the odds being 3:1 against it and it's companions being too far away it stood little chance. The others in it's group apparently noticed the profuse quantity of goblin corpses and decided it best to make a strategic withdrawl.

And so ended the Battle for Dorenemal of Autumn 1053. Four goblin patrols acting in unison was not a good sign for us. The first few groups must have been a probe. This was an all out assault. How long it would be before the rest of the goblin army would be turned in our direction was unknown to me, but it was time to step up our training.

P.S. As a note, Thob was elected mayor in place of Ragnar. All Ragnar said about it was:" Good, lousy job if ye ask me. Now where in the stones did my axe get laid? I've a mighty need for hewin' something. " I hope Thob will do a good job. Mayor is a thankless job, mostly listening to people complain about things, but I guess that's why Thob was elected. He's quite the talker.

Title: Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Frelock on July 11, 2008, 11:01:05 pm

((You know, I don't think you get enough compliments. Your writing is great! And there's so much of it. Honestly, I'm really enjoying reading about your exploits.

Quote
(masterwork large Heliodor) I handed it to Fre. (Do with it what you would like Fre
I think on a table in her room for now, and then in her tomb if she happens to die. If she marries Aardvark, it will be her wedding present to him. (By the way, I love the idea of a 'dwarf of the year award')

Quote
1 Cook (M) + 1 donkey we can't eat but probably should. I'll have to ask Fre where she'd prefer to be assigned.
As to Fre's profession, I really would like it if you kept her as a cook. Perhaps, in time, she could head up a marksdwarf militia, made up of proficient marksdwarves that mainly have civilian jobs. Just a thought.

'Fre' Bittenflag the Sour Burns of Worry? I knew she was pessimistic, but come on... Don't know how you could explain that one away. I am very pleased that she's gotten used to tragedy. No major tantrums from her!...I hope))

Title: Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 14, 2008, 12:16:28 pm

21st of Hematite

We have begun using the northernmost goblin fort as the tombs for our fallen. I've got plans to improve upon it, but those will have to wait for more pressing projects to be completed first. The living take precedence over the dead. Nevertheless, we entombed Steele and Kadol today. It was a great loss to all of us, particularly us original seven, now six. I retrieved Steele's body myself, Ragnar accompanying me to get Kadol our brewer. They have been placed in honor in coffins of obsidian and placed in the stronghold of those that slew them as a testament to our continued defiance of goblinkind. May their bones adorn our tombs and their bodies litter the mountainsides.

It seems strange to me that after having so recently learned about the loss of my brother death would follow so closely. I have resigned myself to face it however, I cannot shirk my responsibilities nor allow them to impede the protection of our people. I am finding myself caring less and less about the trivial things of everyday existance. But our people must take heart that someday we shall be able to live in peace, even if our current sacrifice is what it takes to get there. There was metal to be had in these cliffs and if the goblins wanted to pry it from us they would have to wade through the bodies of their fallen and over our corpses to get it. We will be the wall of steel that keeps those innocent still safe. We are the Walls of zeal, the Fahlstrom clan! We will watch and pray at all times that we might not fall victim to the advances of the enemy.

Title: Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 14, 2008, 12:51:53 pm

Trading with the merchants continued after the battle as it must needs to have done. We needed the supplies they brought.

"I'm sorry Abba that you've been delayed so long. It's been a busy few days. Where were we?"

"If all the goods you brought up are present we can begin trading. I must say I'm impressed with the place you've all built here, and we, all of us, appreciate the protection that you've offered us at the cost of your own blood."

I nodded, though wearily. "Aye, we do what must be done. And humans and dwarves fall equally prey to the goblins. We value your lives as our own, and our mutual prosperity depends on each other to a certain degree."

"True enough, true enough. Were all dwarves of such a mindset and all human likewise then relations between our peoples would be vastly improved, and the goblins much less a threat I am sure. As it is, our people have suffered much of late at the hands of the vile goblins. Fully three settlements have been put to the torch in the last year. And rumors tell of a goblin king and his army operating between here and the human lands to the east. We have been ill used to war and were not prepared as such for the vehemence of the

attacks. Nor as fortified as your own place here. But enough of our mutual problems, let us see what we can do to relieve each other of goods."

"Agreed. Perhaps the goblins that came here have done you some favors after all. We seem to be blessed with an abundance of weapons we care not to keep. We have a great many bows and arrows that they left us with, and a number of iron weapons to boot."

An eager gleam entered Abba's eye at the mention of weapons.

"Such barter would be very welcome indeed. Weapons at this time are fetching good prices everywhere and will be in much demand in the days and years to come. Let me show you what we have brought. Much of what you requested we have with us."

In the end we traded a good number of goblin weapons, bows and arrows and such we could not, or did not want to use. We had steel, goblin weapons were good enough, but inferior to our own. We received a goodly number of metal bars of various kinds. Wood in abundance as well as drink and barrels and even some meat. All very useful items for us, but not in such quantities as I would have preferred. It was a good trade, beneficial to both sides. We took everything they had brought.

"Well, Abba, I thank you for the supplies. Please continue to plan stops here and we'll continue to supply weapons and gear for you."

"Not a problem. Not a problem at all. Though the journey this year has been more dangerous than most, we have you and your family to thank for a good measure of our safety, at least once if not twice over."

"Along those lines I was hoping to ask a personal favor then."

She looked somewhat hesitant there, humans did not often go out of their way to do personal favors for dwarves regardless of the circumstances. It was a measure of her integrity that she nodded and smiled, inwardly probably hoping it would not cost her too dearly.

"I notice that you've got ample room in your wagons now. You've got some of the best goods we've obtained, phantom spider silk and giant cave spider silk gear is hard to come by, even if it is of goblin make. I was hoping you could take a letter and a gift to my brother who has gone to Sazirgeb."

A look of minor annoyance crossed her face before it softened and she spoke. "You need not remind me of the favorable conditions of our trading. The weapons alone will be useful enough. I will do my best to seek out your brother if you wish. We are headed south anyways since the winter snows will soon be upon us. We're not made of such cold resistant material as you dwarves. Bring me what you wish to gift him and I will see that he gets it."

"I have lost one brother to the goblins already, and a father. If I can help my family I will do all I can to do so. Please take this letter to him, and deliver this to him."

I removed the covering to an iron bin placed neatly off to one side. I had been tempted to not send it. We certainly could use such equipment ourselves, but if all he had was ill used copper gear I was certain Scott would appreciate being properly equipped. In the bin lay a complete set of steel armor, minus the plate armor itself, since I knew Scott preferred the mobility of chainmail on his torso. In the bin as well were two gleaming steel battle axes. Abba's eyes went wide at the sight and even several of her guards and fellow merchants came over to gaze at the unused burnished steel equipment.

"I've got a set of armor for my brother, and a fine steel axe. I'd like you to give that to him. The other axe is a gift for you then, as thanks for your services and perhaps a promise of more to come."

Abba stammered a bit as she looked at the gear and I could see her estimating its value in her head. Still, I knew the offer of steel to the humans who rarely crafted anything out of steel would prove more valuable still should it come to that. Abba gave a small nod and said in a quiet voice:

"I will see that he gets it to be sure. I appreciate the trust you've placed in us. My men and I will do our best to safeguard your gift, though I cannot guarantee the axes will arrive unused should the need arise."

"As long as they are used to spill goblin blood I doubt very much my brother or I would mind. I look forward to your coming with news again next year."

"Certainly, we will come. Until then."

They packed up and left within a few days, wagons creaking past the bloodstained ramps that we had defended only days before. It would take many good rains to remove the blood stains there. And I doubted the goblins would give us that long of a reprieve. Hoped, but doubted.



(To keep it consistent with the storyline I've offered the armor as a gift. This is after all mostly about the story. Should we need that armor in the future I'll be sure to lament it's loss. ;))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 14, 2008, 04:17:05 pm**

10th of Limestone Autumn

Thankfully we had a bit of respite from the goblins. Perhaps they've withdrawn for a time since their last failed attempt to retake this place. Today the dwarven caravans arrived. Again, only one or two wagons, and those practically half empty. The only things they have brought us are some bars of metal and a barrel of rum, wine, ale and beer. Oh, and some empty bags. Nothing more. I was so furious I nearly activated the traps on them as they left. I had requested food, drink, wood, and at least a half dozen other necessities, but they claimed that this was all they could 'spare' for Dorenemal. I swear if they try this sort of thing one more year I'll seize the whole shipment and make them walk home naked. Three kobolds were apparently following them as well. Mafol managed to corner one but the other two escaped, none the richer thankfully.

I don't know what we're going to do about food. Things will be very tight this winter I fear. I was counting on at least some supplies from the mountain homes and it seems that again they have dissappointed us. I truly now fear that Agna intends to starve us all if possible. It would take at least a season or two to properly prepare more farms in the granite below us, possibly longer.

On the bright side Rakust appears to be improving. His leg is no longer as inflamed as it once once, though he, as well as Thikut are still bed-ridden. We are running short of lumber and the upper plateau was already harvested and has not regrown yet. I had hoped the caravan would bring wood as well. Nevertheless, we must press on and we need lumber to feed our forges if we are to continue making weapons and armor. I've had the wall in the southern building removed allowing us quick access to the lower plateau while we harvest that area. I'll have it resealed when work is completed there.

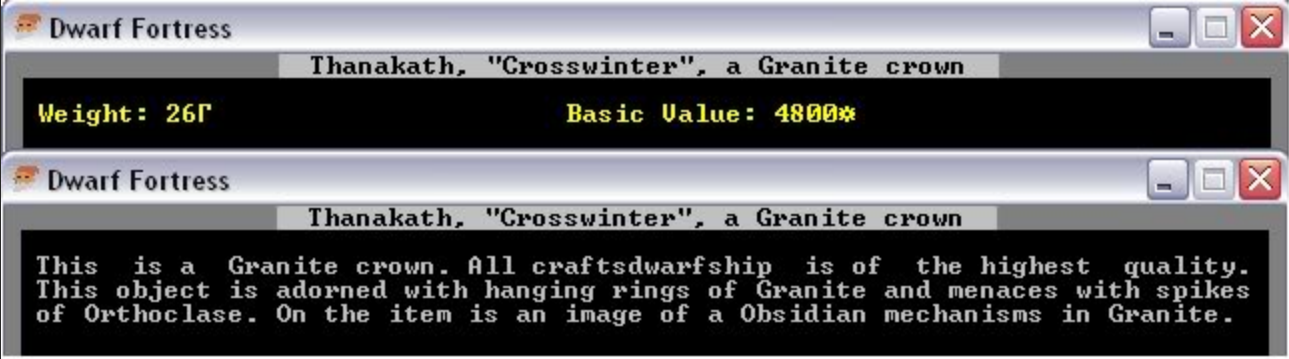
Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 14, 2008, 04:30:37 pm**

7th of Sandstone

Something strange occurred today. Our stonecrafter, Asmel, was eating dinner in the main hall when all of a sudden he stood. A voice echoed from his throat speaking rapidly in the ancient tongue. I could only make out a word here or there. Something about a stone, continuity, approval. And then he was off, calmly striding down the corridors as if he were seeing through solid stone. He claimed a workshop and immediately began work on some mysterious construction.

I've taken inventory of our food situation while he works. It's even grimmer than I originally thought. We have no meat, fish at all, only a handful of plump helmets. I have been neglecting my oversight of our food. I've requested that some of the farmers switch to producing plump helmets rather than pig tails, but it will take time for that. The lakes have frozen again outside, but only just, so the fisherwarves I've ordered to begin cleaning their summer catches. Some seventeen turtles in all. Not bad, but not enough to feed a fortress. Fre is again doing all she can to stretch our food supply and has been making seed cakes again. I think I am fond of several of them. The wild strawberry and prickleberry ones. And of course her pies are to die for. Hmm... perhaps to kill for I should say. It's been a while since we've had a decent feast around here. I'll have to give a stern talking to the merchants this next year about that. Food appears to be in short supply everywhere though, as they're always requesting it as well. That and weapons. The news of the increased goblin activity is disturbing and if it continues as such may very well mean all out war between our races. It has happened before, and any periods of relative peace are usually only breathers before the next war. Of all the skilled races the goblins have proven the least capable of negotiations. At least with us.

P.S. Asmel has finished his work. It's a very nice piece of work.



There's talk of it being inspired by the gods. Since Asmel is a worhipper of Avuz perhaps it is true that she approves of our work here and this was indeed a sign. The ancient tounge is almost extinct, I myself, despite study, have only learned a few of it's words. Asmel, after a brief meeting with him knows none of it. I can only conclude that he was indeed possessed. The fact that it bears an image of our clan heart is a positive omen indeed.

Anyways, time to tighten the belt and press on.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 14, 2008, 04:40:52 pm**

7th of Timber

We've managed to be all right food wise till now. Not great, but not too bad. We haven't had to resort to boiling down the drink and mixing it with flour or dirt to make paste, but I fear it may come to that. We were surprised today by another group of immigrants. They were weary, and some bore minor injuries. Some of them still had soot and ash marking their clothes and faces. They looked haggard and harried and I soon found out why. They were from a settlement to the east and a bit south. The place had been attacked by a large goblin warband. These were the only survivors and they'd only managed that because they had fled as soon as the walls had been breached, taking nothing with them.

I wasn't sure what to do with them. We couldn't turn them away, yet we had no food to spare. While I was conversing with them one of them, the leader of their group approached me and offered his services as a hunter. I knew we had some game in the area, not much but perhaps enough to bolster our food supply until the winter crops began coming in. Another of their group, a cook volunteered to help him as well as one of our own, a child recently grown into full dwarfhood offered as well. Three hunters. That might be sufficient.

Of the others in the group there was
1 Fishcleaner now butcher to accomodate the hunters
1 woodcutter assigned to Ragnar's band
3 Peasants, drafted and in process of equiping
1 weaponsmith
1 cheesemaker that I've asked to take up farming and plant gathering to aid our supplies
2 children
and a second donkey it's owner won't let us eat.

If only goblin tasted good our food shortage would be at an end.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 14, 2008, 05:52:22 pm**

12th of Timber

The food shortage continues. I myself haven't eaten for a while. It's gotten bad enough that our getcutter, Vabosh I think his name was, has taken up the hunting of rats and other bugs to eat. I don't think I'll stoop that low. Our hunters are doing well, though the lack of game is at times daunting. Ragnar and the woodcutters got a few raccoons but that was hardly sufficient to feed a fortress. Everyone is doing their part to help though. Fre is busy in the kitchens as always. But as soon as she finishes a batch they're snapped up by hungry mouths. Same with the butchers. The smell of roast venison, mountain goat and raccoon fill the air and only make the rest of us that much hungrier. It's the injured that suffer the most. Thikut has taken to lying in bed moaning, Rakust is in even worse shape, and I fear his weakened state has allowed a fever to set in. The farmers assure me that within the week we'll have a full crop of plump helmets, and the efforts of the others have managed to keep starvation at bay. But how long it can last I do not know. We ran out of turtles to cooks three days ago, that's when it began getting truly bad. To their credit most have not complained o'ermuch. I think I'll go see if Fre's batch of seedcakes is finished.

P.S. Rakust perished in the night, likely due to a combination of fever and starvation. A very unfortunate loss, and one I attribute mostly to the scheming of pretentious royalty. Agna has much to answer for I fear. Our continued survival, however, is all I can do to try and thwart his plans.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 15, 2008, 12:32:27 pm**

15th of Moonstone Winter

Things remained quiet this winter until today. I was in my office working on the tally of supplies we had when the cry of alarm was sounded. A look of surprise crossed my face but grimly I grabbed for my shield and obsidian sword that lay in a pile in one corner and without further thought rushed towards the stairs. The cry had been sounded from the woodcutters to the south I quickly learned and as I rushed out the door I could see Urvad and her crew gathering behind me. Opening the door blasted me with the cold winds of a snowstorm, the wind cutting through my now worn clothing like a knife. But battle was near and it warmed my heart.

Running towards the unused goblin fort through which we had established a path to the lower plateau I passed many fleeing the opposite direction. They passed without word as they labored for the safety of our halls. I could hear the others clanking behind me, coming, but slightly slower than I who hadn't bothered to put on armor. I was weary of these goblins and hoped dearly that none of ours had perished this day. The building seemed warm in comparison as I entered. The few dwarves I passed in the narrow hall had bad tidings. A goblin patrol had sprung up in ambush. Uvash the woodcutter had died as he tried to retaliate, Kumil had been cut down as he fled.

A pounding began in my ears as I saw them ahead in the dim light filtering into the building through the wall behind them. I charged. A single patrol, 1 guard with four speargoblins. A dangerous group. A single speargoblin was in the lead and braced himself for the charge just in time. I managed to wound him somewhat in the leg, but he clipped my head with his elbow as we went down in a tangle, me stunned.

Through my blurry vision I saw the goblin guard come up and I wondered if that was the end for me there, but he rushed past, chasing the fleeing goblins, mistakenly assuming that I had been the only defender. Fath came charging out of the corridor behind me into the hall where I lay, and plowed into guard like an enraged elk, pushing the guard to one side and slamming him into the wall.

My head cleared and I stood, dodging a thrust from the now erect goblin. I needed to focus and soon was chanting a battlecry, Vigilai et Orai. I sensed rather than saw a second goblin come up behind me spear at the ready then a third joined the one in front forming a circle or iron around me. I lunged ahead, taking the one I had charged in the arm and removing it at the shoulder. It flailed and dropped it's shield as I whipped my sword back in an arc, forcing the goblins behind to jump back from where they had been encroaching. A fourth joined and our deadly dance of iron began, me dodging blows or blocking them with the steel wall I carried in my right hand. Seeing an

opening I lunged again, taking the injured goblin by surprise and splitting him from the side.

I felt another dwarf coming up from behind, the pounding of metal shod feet running, it must have been Urvad. A clash from behind indicated that Fath was wading into the guard, steel overcoming iron.

A thrust forced me to dodge to one side, dropping suddenly, but I was able to use the move to get close enough to a goblin to make a powerful swipe down low, removing one of it's legs at the knee. It tottered trying to stay erect but suddenly off balance and I used the opportunity to close and deliver a powerful backswing, eviscerating it into a pile on the floor. Pivoting quickly I stabbed behind knowing the goblins with the spears would be closing and I caught one by surprise, stabbing deep into the arm. It retreated while the other covered it. Turning on the approaching one I dodged a thrust, closing the distance with a jump and sliced at it, taking off a leg.

I heard a crash and after a dull whump that could only have been the sound of a goblin corpse flying into a wall. Fath had finished the guard, Urvad was closing. I grinned. The goblins must have sensed the turning point but refused to yield. The injured one closed to help his companion but I slashed out forcing it to retreat a step before I turned and severed the remaining leg of it's companion, then an arm. I had time to turn before I saw Urvad and Fath violently subduing the remaining goblin.

Udil and Ragnar joined us shortly after as we left the building to secure the lower plateau and check the damage. Kumil lay only steps from the exit, Uvash some ways away. We went to check on Uvash's body. Steps away from it we saw a second goblin patrol. A second ambush! A guard and five macegoblins.

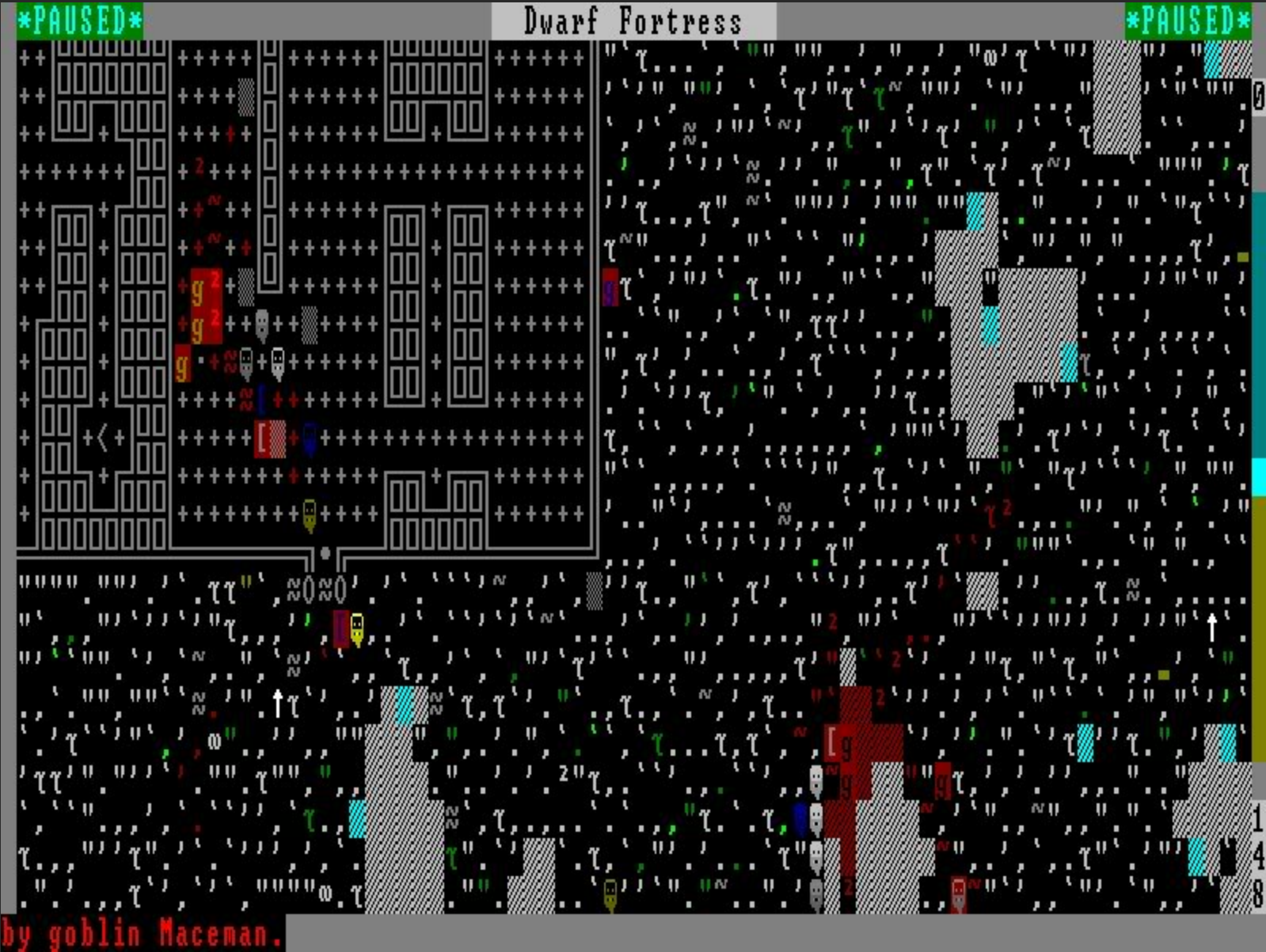
It must have been an eerie sight for them.

Out of the swirling snow ahead of them five dwarves trotted towards them, a grim set about their face, blood covering two of them. It was not dwarf blood. The first patrol should have been inside the fort by now, slaughtering dwarves caught unprepared, but it was not so. Instead they were here, armed to the teeth and covered in steel. Except the one in front. He was covered in blood... and grinning.

The second patrol went down quicker than the first and none survived to run. Ragnar, Uvash, Fath Udil and I against a mere six goblins. It was certainly an unfair fight. Even had none of us been armored it would have been an unfair fight. As it was it could be considered little more than a sporting chance. Giving the rabbit an extra second to run before you fired your crossbow as it were.

So ended the battle for Dorenemal of winter 1053.

We had lost two. Both useful souls who had labored hard to benefit their clan. They would be honored in death.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 15, 2008, 02:26:01 pm**

25th of Opal 1053

Cleaning up after the battles this year continues. We've also resealed the lower building to prevent any potential breaches of security like those that happened during the battle of Winter this year. We need the wood though, so lumber operations must continue. I wish we had a magma vent here but such is not the case.

We have however had a birth. Zefon our once cook now brewer gave birth to a girl. We've congratulated her and given her some time off. We have plenty of drink for a while. Her daughter is cute, I even got to hold her for a bit, though I'm not sure she appreciated anything but my beard. My face is still a little sore.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 15, 2008, 03:10:27 pm**

7th of Obsidian Winter

Our liason has left. He seems younger every time he leaves here I swear. There was a bounce in his step as he left. Vabosh mentioned that he delivered a copy of the report personally to Agna this last year. Said he's spare him the trouble of bribing an outpost official to make a copy. Thankfully Vabosh is old an well respected enough to be above Agna's vindictiveness. Either that or the liason has some powerful allies of his own. In any case, they had asked Vabosh to gather information on the goblin's activities from each settlement he visited this year. So inevitably came the questions.

"Heh, pleased to see you're doing well still Paulus."

"And you Vabosh, though we could be better."

"Perhaps, but perhaps not. I've finished my inspection of the place. It looks nice. You've come a long ways since you first came here."

"Aye, that's true, but fifty dwarves working hard will do that to a place if it's organized."

"True, true... and there's the key. IF it's organized. Anyways, how many members do ye have now? Births of record, deaths and the like?"

"We've sixty two living here now. We've had six deaths and one birth."

"Mmhmm... cause of deaths?"

"Goblins in all cases." I hesitated some. Rakust had technically not died directly from the goblins. "Except one. He was injured by the goblins and later died due to fever and starvation."

"Starvation?"

"Aye. Our food supplies were dangerously low. We've received no food from the dwarven traders since we set up this outpost."

Vabosh looked surprised. "What? Really?"

"Well, if you count the two turtles we got the first year that was some meat, but other than that we've gotten none. We receive only a portion of what we request each year and never the basic supplies. This time around we received a single barrel each of drink that we had asked for and none of the food."

"Mhmmm. I'll make a note of that. Moving on. How many goblins would you estimate you've encountered?"

I double checked my records and made a quick mental count.

"Fifty-two goblins and a few kobolds."

Vabosh's eyebrow went up. "You've encountered fifty-two goblins?"

I nodded. "Aye, we got thirty-six of them though, and captured one. The rest ran. That's counting the ones we got while you were here last time of course. Without those it'd be seven less met and four less killed."

Vabosh smiled and wrote furiously. "Well, good work then. Good work indeed. Just so you know, I've estimated your village to be worth about 600000 ingots now. You really should consider appointing a sheriff sometime soon."

"Aye, I've got a dwarf that'd be good for the job. Give Agna my regards and tell him he's welcome to come any time he wants. Oh, and warn him about the traps. It'd be a shame if he died on our doorstep."

"I will. He'll not like my report this year. Even less than last. Heh. Good luck to ye Paulus. Until next time."

"Aye. You take care, and so will we."

That afternoon I designated some furniture to be placed in one of the larger, smoothed rooms and took Ragnar down to them.

"Well, it seems this has been a long time in coming. But we're growing too fast to postpone it any more. Ragnar, I appoint you as Captain of the guard of this holding. I've spoken with Mayor Thob and he agrees that you're the logical choice. The fortress guard will be reporting directly to you. I'd recommend Urvad as squad leader for the military forces but that's up to you."

Ragnar seemed pleased. Said he might have to install a chapel on the upper and lower plateau for the goblins as they came in. Something to inspire them with. Somehow I doubted that inspiration was what they needed.

P.S. Urvad gave birth to a girl this evening. I hadn't known she was pregnant when she entered battle. She certainly didn't say anything about it. She's carrying he daughter with her now, everywhere she goes. It looked like she's using an extra helmet strapped to her side. Maybe the girl will grow up to be like her mother. We could certainly use more dwarves like that in the world.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 15, 2008, 03:39:27 pm**

13th of Granite Spring

The elves have come again. I admit that though I'm not particularly fond of them they were a welcome relief. Even more so when I saw what they had brought. Sad is the day when the elves bring us more useful items than our own brothers. But we quickly brought up a few bins of the stonecrafts that had been made over the winter. I'd even taken a turn or two at stonecrafting myself. It brought back fine memories to when I'd made seemingly endless amounts of obsidian swords to use in my traps. I've even taken to carrying a sword with me. It just feels natural now. Ragnar chewed me out the other day though for putting myself in jeopardy so often. I think he's particularly annoyed that I'm faster than he is when I don't wear armor and he does. It means he doesn't get to the goblins first. Maybe I will suit up next time though. The last battle could have easily gone against me and I'd not relish sitting in bed recovering from a goblin spear wound for months on end. Thikut still hasn't recovered completely.

Where was I? Ah yes, the elves. we wound up trading a large amount of our stonecrafts for what they had brought. Several bins of cloth we've yet to begin working with. Ample drink and empty barrels. Ragnar will be happy, they brought two barrels of sewerbrew. And they even brought the first harvest of herbs and berries. Fre will be delighted.

P.S. It's been three days now since we've traded and Fre planned a feast to commemorate the occasion. We're a little late with our annual feast but this seemed like a good occasion. We have ample food for such an occasion. Venison, plump helmet biscuits and Prickleberry pie, courtesy of Fre's masterful culinary talents. She's spent the last few days tirelessly laboring in the kitchens for the occasion. Best of all, our grand dining hall is now complete. I've had barrels rolled out for the festivities and have declared a party at the obsidian dining table. (ok, in actuality I didn't. But several have been held there over the course of the winter.)

We drank, ate, talked and drank some more. When everyone was fully sated I stood.

"My fellow clan, this past year has been one of hardship and toil but you've all performed your labors splendidly for which I thank you all. I appreciate the extra work done to help us get through the lean winter and thanks to the supplies from the elves and the culinary talents of Fre we have this most excellent feast. Better food than we've had for some time now I dare say."

Some applause broke out near Fre, but she glared at liberally at those around her till it ceased.

"In more solemn matters I would like to honor this year those that have passed from this mortal delving to the next. Many have died at the hands of the goblins and I'd not have them buried in a shallow grave underneath the snows. In particular I'd like to honor Steele, me friend and one of the founders of this place. Twas he who tirelessly labored to fortify our outer walls that we could all be safe today. To honor those now passed I've had the north fort cleaned until the obsidian glistens and have designated that as our mausoleum to the dead. Should ye desire to stroll through the halls to see the engravings, the statues or pay your respects all are welcome and be assured that should you perish untimely or live to a stone's age there will be a place of honor for all in those halls. The statues of our kin and memorials to the dead are how we honor them that we may never forget their sacrifices for our safety. Steele is entombed in obsidian with an obsidian block at his feet, for that was what he did. So this year I honor not the living, but the dead, and ask ye to do the same."



(Sorry Steele. At least you have a place of honor among the dead.)

P.P.S.

The feasting continued, though subdued until well past midnight. I fear I imbibed a bit much myself but being among my friends was pleasant. The glow of our banked fires a story or two above did much to heat the place, of course it might have been the drink too. I overheard Erush telling a newcomer a story I'd like to relate since I found it amusing.

"Nah, don't ye worry about Fre. She's just like that."

"But she's just the cook. What gives her the right to glare like that?"

Erush laughed quietly. "Nah, there ye've gotten it wrong. Aye, she's the cook, and a better one than I've ever been. But that isn't the end of her skills. Now keep in mind I wasn't here when it happened, twas in the first year before I arrived, when it was just the seven founders."

The other dwarf was paying rapt attention now. Stories of the founders and the first year were common enough but with so many new dwarves coming that had never been there nor known what it was like they were retold commonly.

"Ya see, Fre isn't just a cook, nor a farmer, though she's good at that and a half dozen other trades. But she's a marksdwarf too, probably the best we've got. Twas she that killed Stasost the goblin general in charge o' this place before the seven arrived. It's said she put three bolts through him before he could even get close. Then he turned to run and she put another in his hindquarters for good measure before killing him outright. I'd not mess with her lad. But here's the best part. Apparently she'd put some pies in the oven before she'd left and rather than make sure the goblin was dead she ran out to make sure her sour prickle-berry pies hadn't burnt. That's why she's Fre Nitigsolon Zunekning Bumal, or Fre Bittenflag the Sour Burns of Worry. Nah lad. She deserves all the respect ye can give, and if she tells ye to jump ye better be five feet in the air before ye draw breath again. "

I felt it an amusing story. Not even remotely close to the truth, but close enough in many ways.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 15, 2008, 06:52:15 pm**

3rd of Slate

Led our hunter that has been so useful duing the periods of food shortage started acting strangely today. He walked in to my office with a strange look on his face and said he'd had a vision while out in the forest. A vision that needed acting upon. He said naught else but went and claimed a crafts dwarf workshop sketching things furiously on the smooth floor with pieces of chalk. Quarries, forests, shells, skeletons, stacks of leather, cut gems. All sorts of strange things. I'd felt such inspiration myself and knew it was best acted upon. I approved a number of bones and shells from the dump for his use but gems we were short of. There werent' many deposits in the area but Medtob had mentioned a few clusters of rough ruby out near the east road, and down the cliff a ways. I called Medtob and Mafol in and asked them to remove the rubies, had our gemcutter get to work rebuilding the shop and start cutting the gems. I hoped it would be ready before Led snapped. I'd hate to lose our best hunter.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 15, 2008, 09:56:57 pm**

14th of Slate

Mafol escorted a group of immigrants in from the east where they'd been removing some rough rubies from the grasps of a bauxite vein. With the way Mafol was chatting and bowing slightly I knew we could be in for some trouble. The news was not good, but not in the way I thought. It was another group of immigrants, with a noble and his two bodyguards that is every noble's due when they travel, but I was surprised to see Lord Rovod here. They looked well enough all things considered but I feared that if he were here Kilrudmorul must be suffering. Lord Rovod was the epitome of what nobility should be in my mind. Friendly, outgoing, humble, helpful, at least generally, and more than willing to try new things. I greeted him warmly.

"Lord Rovod, I am pleased to see you again. What brings you to our halls, and with such a large retinue?"

"I wish that the situation were better, Paulus, I really do. It seems the flame of our Kilrudmorul has been extinguished, no longer to burn bright in a dark and fearsome place. I will explain it all later, but we are travel weary and in need of rest. To be sincere we have come to join you since our mutual home is now lost to all but those that dwell in the deep places."

"Well, be welcome then and find refreshment below. There is room enough for all here, provided they are willing to shoulder our burdens with us."

"Of that I've no doubt. We've heard word of your stronghold and some of it's fame even at Kilrudmorul. We, who were once brothers can be brothers again. All that are with me are those that are faithful to either myself of the memory of what Kilrudmorul once was."

"Then you all have a home here. Head below and you shall find refreshment and lodging enough for all I dare say. We've gotten a little overzealous in our construction of rooms and beds. There is sufficient for all. I'd imagine we even have a place suitable for you my lord, just let us get it furnished before you move in."

In all there were 18 others with him. His bodyguards Deler and Doren, who had been in the Royal guard at Kilrudmorul, as well as three peasants, a woodcrafter, a woodcutter, a glassmaker, a weaponsmith, a weaver/clothier, two fish dissectors (one I've moved to leatherworking, the other to woodburning), an animal caretaker/trainer, a brewer, a lyemaker now architect under my supervision, a stoneworker, a metalcrafter and a fish cleaner, now fisher dwarf and engraver during the winter. Oh, and a mule, two cow calves and a horse foal. It seems we would be needing the animal caretaker after all.

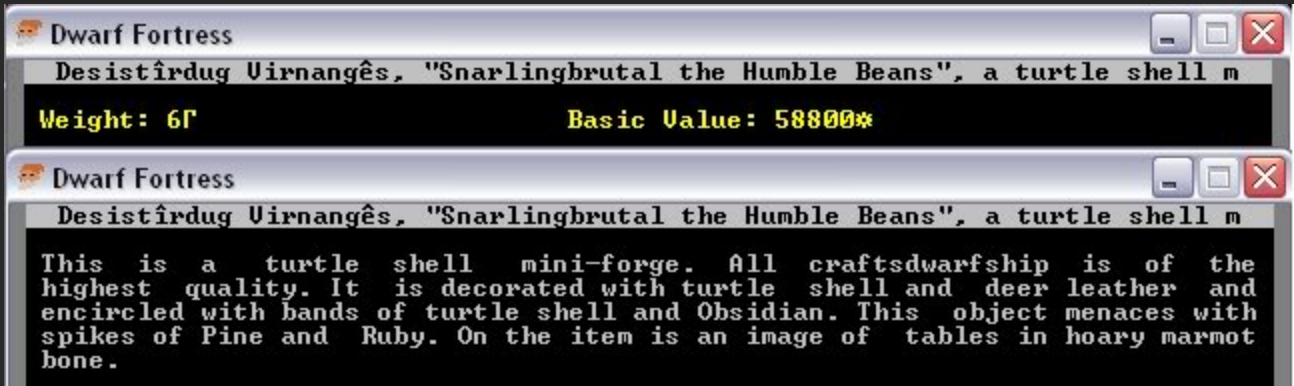
Since we've received no immigrants from the capital for some time now this is a boost to our numbers. After speaking with Lord Rovod I learned what happened at Kilrudmorul.

After the departure of the 'resettled' the Dutchess had ordered the gates sealed. None had gone in or out for over six months. The goblin siege remained, however, despite it all. It was perhaps in desperation that the Dutchess had ordered a draft and had many of the remainder outfitted as they could. The charge from the gates must have been spectacular. Even the goblins had been astounded. And though they carried the day the cost had been dear. Very dear. Nearly a third of their forces, most of the untrained, had been killed in battle. The goblins had been driven away, but no decisive victory had been forthcoming. It was all the survivors could to to clean the field of their own dead. A month later they were attacked again. From inside. A small host of creatures from the depths of the lake and now their mines had risen from beneath them and started to slay all they could find. The fortress guard had managed to drive them off as well, but again at great cost. The guard had been equipped with weapons and armor of copper, it being a very common metal in the area. There had been no iron as I recall. That had been, perhaps, a poor choice, but better I suppose than nothing. Four of the guard lay dead after the attack, and a half dozen civilians. Five more were injured and perished within the month. With such tragedy it is no surprise that the Dutchess ordered the place abandoned, the fortress collapsed so that goblins could not use it. Those loyal to her she took with her, and the remainder of the military, since they were, technically hers to command. Lord Rovod had gathered those that wanted to keep alive the memory of Kilrudmorul in it's glory and decided to come here. Apparently it had almost come to a direct confrontation with the dutchess. But Rovod was nobility too and entitled to his liberty. She could say nothing directly, and was required by law to provide him with his escort. I think he chose well. I don't know Deler or Doren, but they appear to be stout dwarves and do their duty well.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 15, 2008, 10:10:13 pm**

20th of Slate

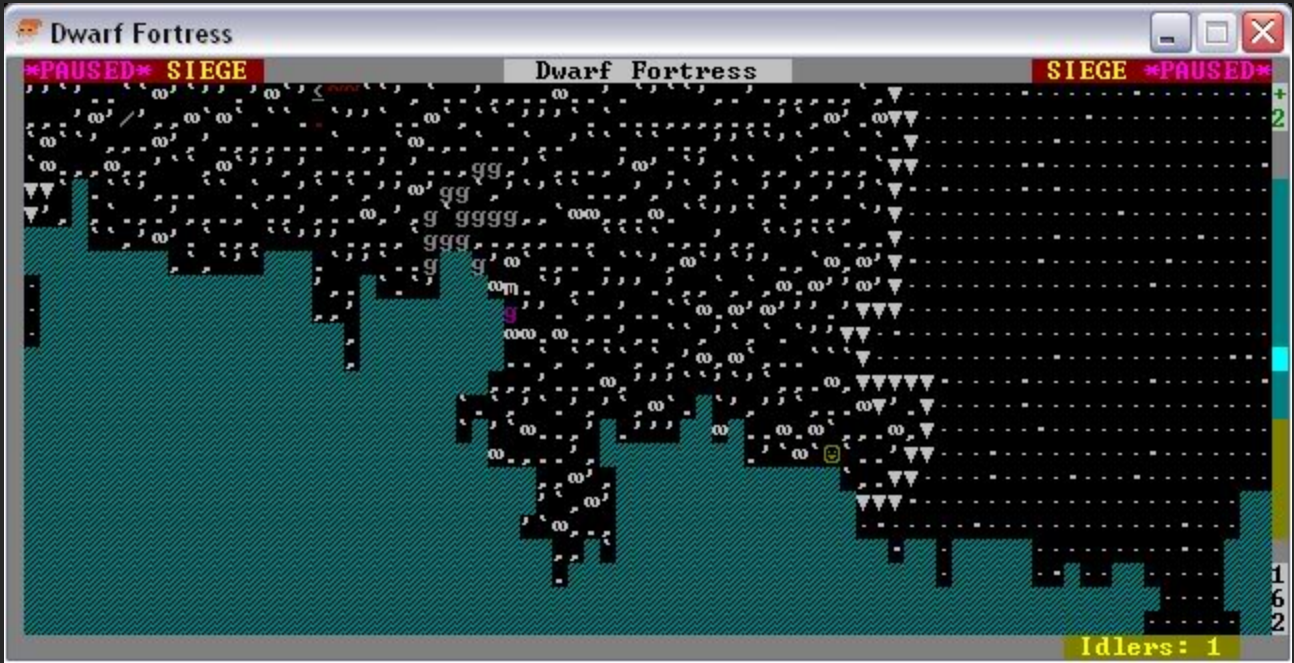
Led has finished his work. I was rather surprised, but he adamantly claims the designs for it he received in a vision while hunting. A female dwarf appeared to him and showed it to him, telling him how to make it. Must have done, he had no prior experience carving bone, stone, metal or anything else to my knowledge, yet had produced a wonder. He firmly believes that it was the goddess Avuz that came to visit him, though he himself is a casual worshiper of Egul. Considering the item he made I'm inclined to believe him, as fascinating as the story is. I simply cannot see him coming up with something like that himself. It is a beautiful representation of a forge, though in miniature. He calls it Desistirdug Virnangês, Snarlingbrutal the Humble Beans. I admit the name is somewhat confusing. Led, however, believes it to be a representation of the approval of Avuz for not only our metalworking but other aspects of our life as well, specifically the legendary dining hall we have created for our use. Even the hall at Kilrudmorul, though better engraved, was not it's equal. And I've further plans for it. Matching the tables for one. The mix of stones the tables are made with somehow offend my sense of organization. I'll have to see to that at some other time.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 16, 2008, 12:34:32 pm**

10th of Hematite Summer

The day I've dreaded has come. The goblin army that built the original forts has begun to return. We are besieged! A platoon of goblins has shown up on the upper plateau. Erush was hunting in the area and spotted them first and was able to sound the alarm.



Unfortunately he wasn't able to get away and was caught and killed. We mustered our armed forces. Aardvark, Fre, Ragnar and myself joined the regular military at the intersection of roads. Uvash, Fath, Udil and Doren were there when we arrived. One of the fortress guard Ushrir Gamilmeng had already charged up the ramp in order to delay the goblins long enough for us to get prepared below. It was a noble sacrifice. He performed well but ultimately died, exhausted from running and combat. It was also unfortunately unnecessary. By the time the goblins began down the ramp there were more than sufficient to repulse the Hammergoblin platoon leader and the fifteen goblin lancers swarming down the ramp. The Hammergoblin led the charge, eager to get at the dwarves waiting calmly below, in two perfect lines.

Perhaps he was too focused on us to realize that he'd been led into a trap. He was the first to spring one of my deadly weapon traps. He was also the only creature I've seen so far to survive setting one off. It was a testament to his strength I suppose. But nonetheless, he was severely injured, missing a foot, had mangled legs where the obsidian blades had entered, and a wounded upper torso and head. He passed out but the remainder of the goblins charged irregardless. Four more were caught in the traps before we began engaging, Ragnar at the head, Fath behind him and the rest of us just a step or two behind that. Fre was already emptying her quiver into the oncoming horde. The whole battle lasted almost a full three mintues before the goblins retreated in a rout. The five surviving goblins ran. Two were cut down on the ramp. Ragnar and Fath pursued the goblins that gained the upper plateau. Only one of the goblins managed to cross the river before being cut down by the determined pair.

So ended the siege of 1054. The first one had lasted but nine days from beginning to end. I had no doubt that more would come as the goblin army would stream back to this place they must have at one time considered their refuge. We had lost two good dwarves, but none

in the fighting thankfully. I'll have to order the hunters to wear more armor, just in case such happens again. I'll also have to consider equipping the guard. Ushrir had run of unarmed, with naught but leather armor and a shield. That would have to be remedied as soon as possible. Aardvark had a lot of work to do.

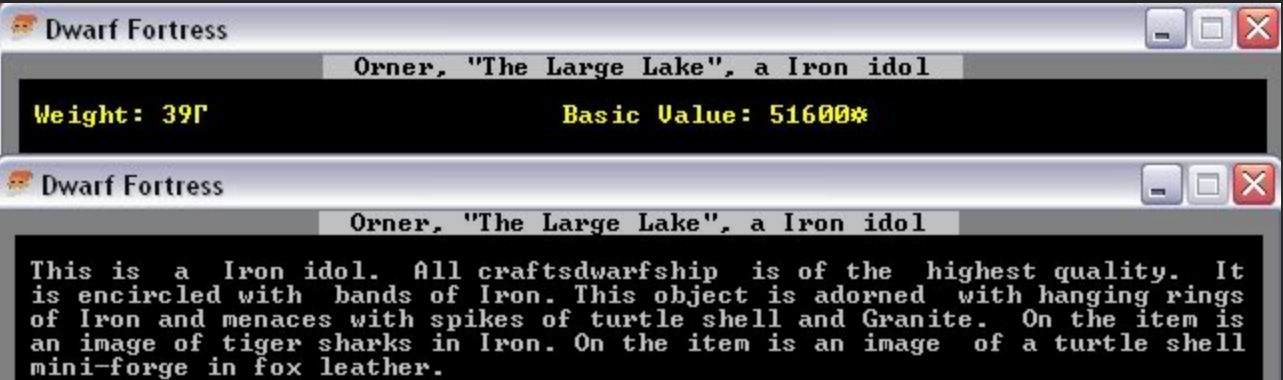
P.S. I almost forgot to mention this. Litast, the child that recently came of age was up hunting with Erush when he discovered the goblins. She was the one that brought the news of the siege. Well, it seems that people are greatful and she's been elected Mayor. Thob doesn't seem to mind to much. I'm not sure he really liked the job. He was a little unhappy about moving out of the mayor's quarters though. Perhaps we'll have his room worked on by the engravers a bit. So we're down to Led as our only hunter. It's probably safer that way. I've ordered the hunters and woodcutters to wear chainmail armor while at work. It may hopefully help keep them safer.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 16, 2008, 03:20:51 pm**

5th of Malachite

Ustuth our metalcrafter began giggling like a little girl today. I found it mildly disturbing but she then proceeded to prance off and kick Aardvark out of his smithy. The she began screaming for materials. Of all the nerve. I told her where she could go and what she'd find there. Turns out all she wanted was turtle shells. Everything else she already had.

In any case, it took her some time to finish it but the result is rather pretty. An Iron idol of a female dwarf working. She said that it was high time we set up a temple to Avuz here and that this idol would be the focus for such work. It made reference to previous inspired items as well. And some other very random things. I had no idea where the tiger sharks came it. We were high in the mountains. She'd never even eaten shark, much less seen one. I guess I'll have to put a temple on the list of things to do. At least she gave it a good enough name. Nothing about humble beans.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 16, 2008, 03:39:19 pm**

15th of Limestone Autumn

My how the time flies. The dwarven caravan arrived. Somehow the humans never showed. I hoped Abba was ok. Though with the goblins like flies on a corpse out in the passes it's possible she hadn't dared come this way and instead taken the longer eastern route.

In any case I was pleased to see that the merchants finally decided to bring enough supplies this year. I was surprised the see the junior merchant sitting up in the front wagon and it was he that addressed me.

"Greetings holder Paulus. We've come to trade."

"Aye, I gathered that. Merchants do that or so I hear. You better have brought what we wanted this year. And where's the other fellow, the head merchant?"

He puffed out his chest slightly, then remembered that I had, just the previous year, threatened to confiscate all their goods and make them return home naked if need be.

"I'm the head merchant for this route now. The previous one was... um... not able to make it. For reasons of health."

"Well, climb down and let me see what you've got then."

The goods they had brought were just what I had requested. I was pleased, and so would everyone else be. Ample amounts of food, both meat and plump helmets, a full wagon of drink and barrels of all kinds. They'd even brought 50 steel bolts like I'd asked. And more bars of course. One never knew when they'd be useful and I liked to be prepared.

"That's good. We'll take the lot of it."

He floundered for a second. "What, you're taking all of it?"

"Aye." I chuckled "But don't worry, we'll trade you for it fair and square."

In the end I gave them what I thought a fair amount of goods. Mostly of goblin make. The last few items I tossed on the pile where some Giant Cave spider silk socks. Goblin make, but we'd at least washed them before binning them. He looked at them eagerly, almost hungrily.

"Well, that's more than fair I'd say, how's that sound?"

"Toss in another ten of those socks and you've got yourself a deal." he said, eyeing the socks still.

I'd guessed they'd sell well. Such items were the height of luxury and went for well over a thousand ingots each. But I wasn't in a quibbling mood. That and I'd not brought up even a third of the goods we had to trade. I let him have them and he looked surprised at the easy acquisition and pleased that things had gone so well. He promised to be back next year with whatever we required. Considering by my calculations he'd make well over fifteen thousand ingots of of us alone he'd better.

It was a relief for me pure and simple that they had brought what I'd asked. Since Abba hadn't made the run this year I was concerned we'd run short of supplies again come winter, but this would see us through comfortably. They even brought wood, which was good since we were again running somewhat low. This place took a lot to heat, and Aardvark and his crew needed every drop of heat they could get for all that steel.

Trading went well this year. And we only had a single kobold show up that Iton, one of our newer woodcutters had dealt with as it ran. Led informed me that there were wolves again infesting the lower plateau. Not ideal but we'd almost logged the whole area and would be able to leave it for some time. There'd be little else there that would take civilians into the area so I wasn't overly worried. I looked forward to a nice quiet winter.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **July 16, 2008, 04:33:40 pm**

[OOC]
I am going ask for a full plate armor for Paulus here. He doesn't want his good friend to run into combat unprotected.
[/OOC]

Aardvarks Log

16th Limestone.
Churning out weapons and armor for our militia and hunters.
At least it is easier than what it was in the beginning, now I don't have to do the whole process myself. Now I can do what I know. Create tools for our survival. A weapon here, a piece of armor there. I am going to ask Paulus if I can create a full steel suit for him as a personal gift. I am going to work long hours on it so that he can have the best armor that I can make lest he run off into combat again. Well I better go back into the smithy and continue working on those tools again.

PS. I should also ask Paulus about us creating crossbows from the less strong ores we find. So that our hunters can shoot us some more game, besides I could really do with a wolfmeat roast made by Fre.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **DarkMagnus** on **July 16, 2008, 06:52:27 pm**

(Is Ragnar still busy woodcutting or can he start training for war now? The fortress needs some champions now that we're a barony, otherwise a megabeast is going to wander in and decimate us. Also, could we get updates on our characters? Great story by the way, it's well-written and consistently updated. I'm always sad when I come online and there's no update :) Also, I'll be out of school in a couple weeks, so maybe one of the other forts in the world I could run a community game for? Maybe after we finish with this one I remake Ragnar and we have two Fahlstrom clan forts going on at the same time?)

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Kuli** on **July 16, 2008, 08:21:57 pm**

I really like this story and have been following it for a while. Any plans to post a map on the DFMA? I for one would like to see that.

Are you still allowing people to claim dwarves? If not...uh, just ignore this. But if so, I'd like to have a Speardwarf named Kuli. If you need a non-military dwarf instead, then I'd prefer a cook/brewer. Gender does not matter.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 16, 2008, 09:30:34 pm**

27th of Sandstone

Ducim, one of our furnace operators gave birth to a boy today. We congratulated her of course, and had a round that evening in our grand dining hall. As a side note, I've finally gotten the tables in better organization. It looks much better now. My other project is coming along well, I've got the miners working on the lower portion while the masons work on the upper. In any case, this quiet period has been good, though we're again short of lumber. By the stones I wish we had magma in this place, but we've been amply blessed with ore and flux so I cannot complain. Only the north end of the upper plateau remains completely untouched. Led mentioned lots of trees being in the area but mentioned a pack of wolves being there as well. Aardvark caught me suiting up in plate as I was going to survey it.

"Oi lad, what've ye got in mind? Piecemeal plate? And one of my steel scimitars? You're lookin' for trouble if I'm not mistaken."

"Nah, just having a bit of sport with the local wildlife on the upper north side. Need to check the condition of lumber. Got to have fuel since you insist on burning through it so forsakenly fast. Anyways, it's just some wolves. This old stuff'll be fine."

"Aye, I made it, it'll serve well enough. One of these days you'll have to let me get measurements so I can make you a proper suit of plate though. Especially if you insist on poking your nose into Ragnar's business. Not that he minds. Even I like a bit of a tussle with the greenskins now and again."

"You do that. I'd appreciate it I assure you."

"Should I make some crossbows for our defense as well? I've been wondering about that. You've yet to have me make a crossbow or bolt."

"Nah, don't worry about it. If I recall from our last inventory we've got at least a half dozen in assorted metal we've 'acquired' from the goblins. And well over a hundred and fifty bolts too. We should be fine for a bit there. Thanks though. Just keep up with the armor."

"Kin do. Luck to ye. Bring me back some of that wolf, eh? I'd fancy a nice roast."

I laughed. "Not a problem, ye could just check the larder though. I'm sure we've got some there. Led's been busy."

The upper plateau was calm. Just me and the wolves. I wondered briefly who was the predator and who the prey. That was before I tested my new steel shortsword. It worked beautifully. Lumber here was in plentiful supply, and though it was far from our defenses we needed it. The forges needed to stay running.

((We actually do have 2 Iron, 2 copper, 2 bronze and 3 Bismuth bronze crossbows, and 159 iron bolts. Courtesy of the goblins actually. And we have wolf meat. ;D I'll post an update on your characters again at the four year mark. Don't worry Ragnar, you're a legendary woodcutter now but you've moved on. You're the sheriff and I've installed three steel pumps for training in the barracks for you and the military. Everyone is sparring with steel and is mostly armored in steel. Some have grabbed iron shields since I have so many of those from the goblins as well. And welcome to the clan Kuli! We have two brewer's and Fre's all the cook we need. But I certainly can give you a speardwarf. Look for your details come the four year mark I'll probably have up within a day or two, since it's mid winter already.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 16, 2008, 10:31:43 pm**

7th of Timber

I've met with Vabosh again. He seemed happy to be back and assured me that he's taken steps to rectify at least some of the meddling that Agna has perpetrated upon us. The head merchant was taken, and his records examined. It turns out the liason office determined he had been accepting bribes and he was sentenced to three hammerstrikes. He only survived the first two. I'd known something had happen, but was very happy to be on at least equal footing with the merchants now. In addition Vabosh's report from last year provided considerable support in other areas as well. Agna had been claiming that since we'd established an outpost at a goblin fort the danger to immigrants was too great to allow any to come. Our population numbers disabused many to that notion and they began questioning the danger involved. When Vabosh had provided the numbers for dwarf deaths compared to other settlements we were quite normal. Some casualties were simply expected and our numbers didn't seem excessively high. What did seem higher than normal, at least to some was the amount of goblins we encountered and our tally of escaped versus dead goblins. That itself was apparently a matter of question. Agna didn't believe my numbers and Vabosh simply had my say-so about the matter.

In any case, Vabosh is still conducting his audit. Claims he needs to finish it before he interviews me further. But because of the previous year the restriction on immigrants had been lifted. Which brings me to today. We received our first immigrants from the capital in about two years. Only seven of them to be sure, but seven brave-hearted dwarves. For reference:

- 1 Miner
- 1 Woodburner now woodcutter as well.
- 1 Potash maker goes by the name of Kuli. I told him we don't bother with that here and he was needed in the military. He seemed eager, we'll have to see.
- 1 Peasant now fortress guard
- 1 Carpenter now woodcutter as well
- 1 Thresher ... I'll find something for him to do
- 1 Dyer now weaver as well

Oh, and a mule and a donkey. Still, that's good I suppose. The animals have been breeding some and we've erected a kennel and established an area to put the commercial animals. If things get bad we'll use them as an alternate food source I suppose. I don't expect that will be necessary.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 17, 2008, 12:00:43 pm**

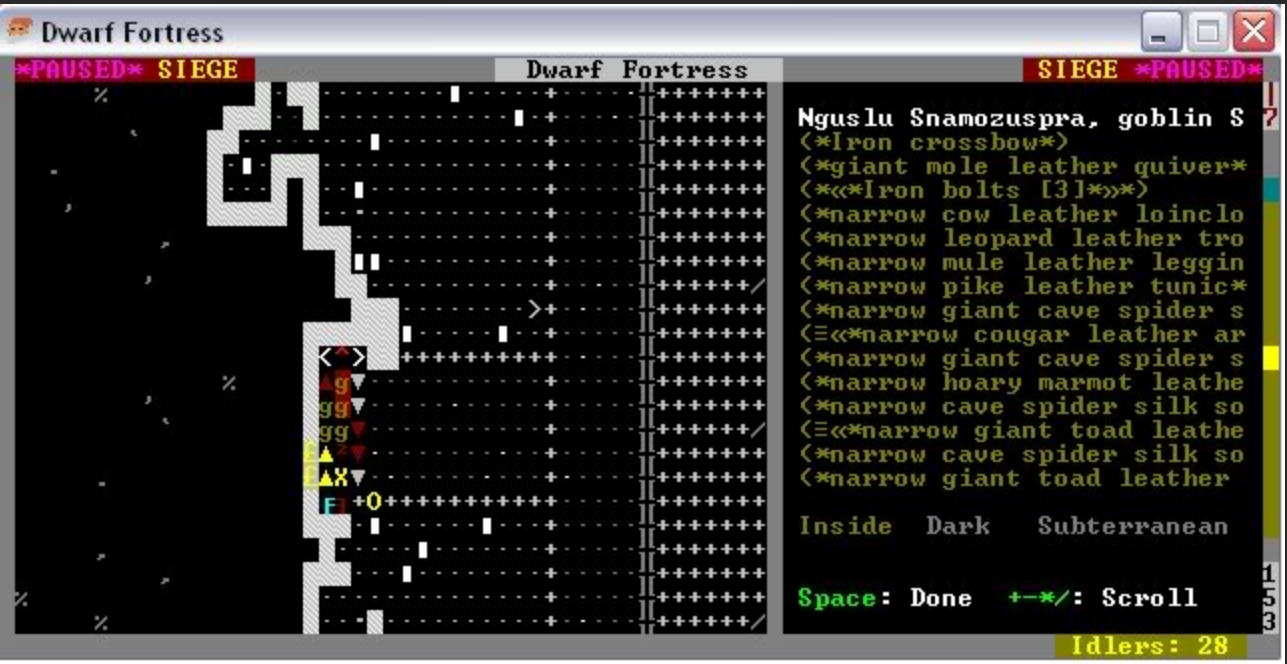
14th of Moonstone Mid-winter

The outpouring of hatred towards our fort from goblin-kind reached a new height today. We are besieged again. Unfortunately for us we were still logging the upper plateau when they arrived and several spotted the platoons of goblins. Two platoons, one of speargoblins the other of pikegoblins. I guess they figured reach would serve them better since we had superior equipment. Oh, and each platoon was led by an elite crossbowgoblin. Them I was concerned about. By the time I got word it was already too late for those as couldn't run really fast. Urdim the mule and Bim the donkey died under fire from the crossbowgoblins. Ast, their owner was up there too, followed by Ral who was right behind him. Both were running as fast as they could, the goblins in hot pursuit. The clatter of crossbow bolts was like rain. Ast almost made it, though he was weeping for his slain pets. A bolt took him through the leg though a short fifteen feet from the ramp down. Ral, the woodcutter was behind him and took a bolt in the gut before being overwhelmed by the speargoblins.



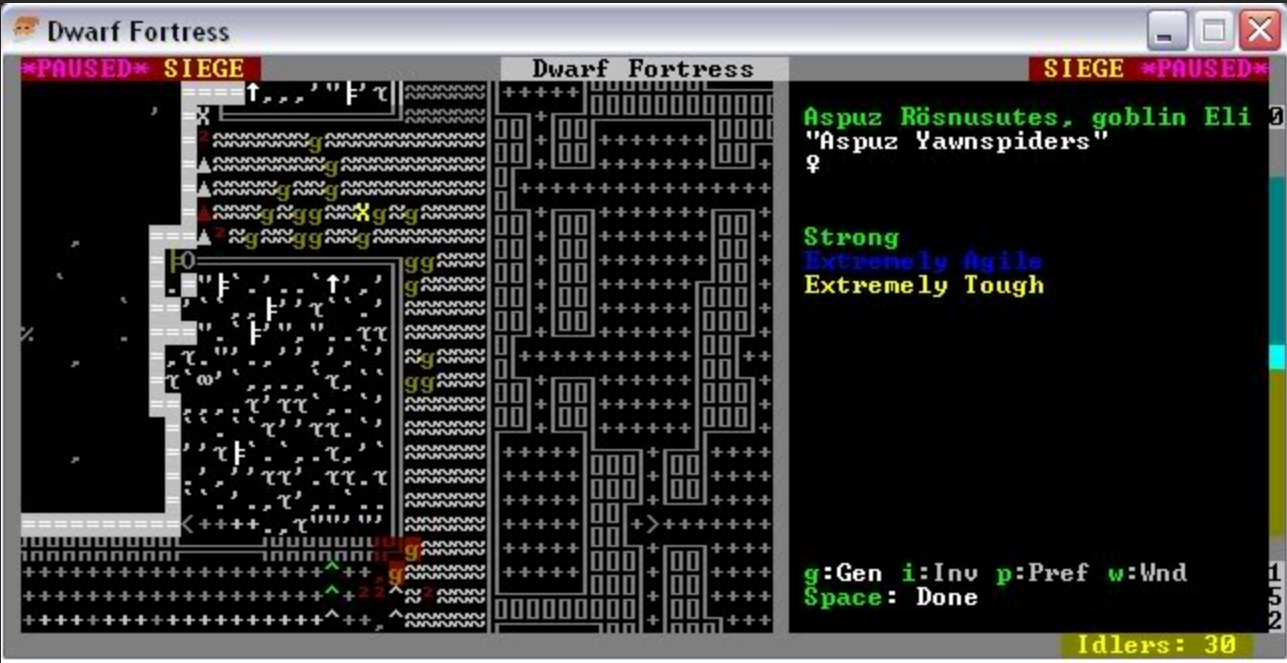
Below we were beginning to group up behind the defensive wall leading to the trading post. Only Led had the corner visible, crossbow in hand and waiting for the first sign of a head that needed a bolt fitted to it.

The first group of goblins tore down the ramp howling for dwarven blood and revenge on their fallen kindred. The leader was in front and stepped on a weapon trap first. Little was left of him after that. The remainder of his platoon hesitated for a bit and regrouped before deciding that they couldn't all be stopped and they rushed the line en masse, setting off more traps but making it through.

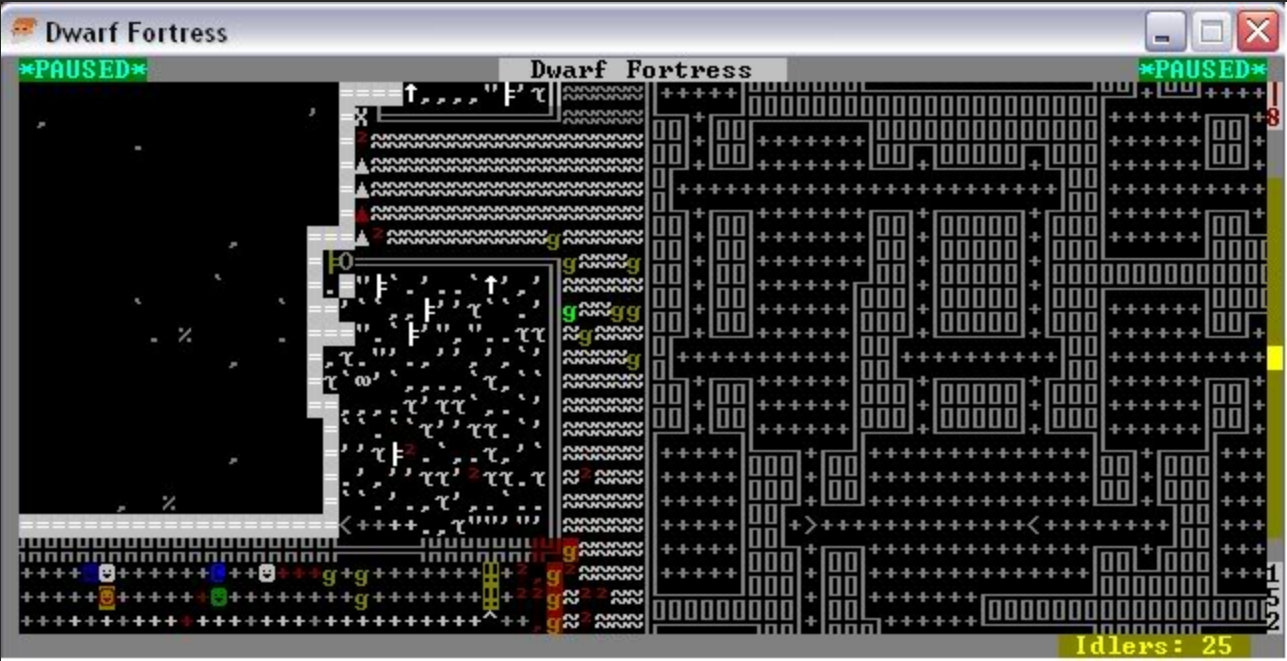


Of the fifteen, only nine made it to the bottom of the ramp, though one turned to flee back up it and stepped on a trap that he had missed the first time. The remaining eight charged on, slightly ahead of the second group that had made it down the ramp with minimal

casualties.



The knot of goblins charged around the corner, some of the first running into our backup defenses, two being caught in cages in the process. Most made it through though and Led began firing at rapidly approaching goblins. The rest of us still lay hidden behind the wall just feet from the goblins. Ragnar gave to order to charge and fully ten of us, armored in steel charged the remainder of the goblins. Goblins are not the smartest of creatures but they have an innate sense of what they need to do to survive. Upon seeing us the remaining goblins fled in haste. Some falling to our blows and bolts in the process. The remaining leader and three of his followers fled up the ramp while a group of five soldiers fled to the east before turning south. Only the leader and his three managed to escape.



The second siege of Dorenemal of 1054 ended. We had lost two who were exposed when the goblins arrived. Unfortunate, but the forges needed fuel. Of our combatants there was not a single one that had injuries. Thirty two goblins had come to take the place, only four survived. I saw Vabosh inspecting the battle site afterwards, making copious notes. I too surveyed the damage. I was unhappy that our woodcutters continued to take the brunt of the attacks but such were the dangers of working outside our fortifications. Perhaps I could do something to rectify the situation in the future, but that would take extensive work. We found 18 crossbow bolts from the goblin leaders on our roof and the roof of the adjacent building. Ast had indeed run well. Both he and Ral would be honored among our dead. We also found a goblin hand on the roof of the neighboring building. It seemed a long way for it to travel, but I couldn't imagine a goblin wandering through our fort to the top of this place just to remove his hand to perplex us with.

We now had three goblin prisoners. I needed to have a place made for Ragnar to use for more direct combat training.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 17, 2008, 12:58:33 pm**

1st of Obsidian Winter 1054

We have finished cleaning up after the siege finally, though the ramp and entryway are beginning to take on a red color despite the cleaning. Vabosh finished with his audit as well and came to give me the new, both good and bad.

"I've finished my work here and I wanted to let you know what's happening in the tribe. To begin with, your village is now appraised at approxamitely 1.25 million ingots. That's quite a jump from last year."

"Aye, we've had some inspiration strike, and we've got skilled craftsdwarves of all types. We've been very fortunate."

"That is true enough I suppose, though it pains me to deliver this next part. Officially our tribe is now at war with the goblins, though that's not really news to you or most living outside of all but the biggest mountainhomes. There are those, and you can guess who, that accuse your clan of being responsible for precipitating the war by attacking this fortress."

I began to interrupt him but he raised his hand to quiet me and continued.

"I know, as do others. The charges are absurd. But let me continue. The king had been under considerable pressure to act lately and, as you may be aware of, our kingdom is not fully prepared for war. In order to manage this the king has decreed a levy be raised by each community. No fewer than five dwarves in a hundred are called to serve in the army. As your brother is currently serving, and serving well I might add, that counts as your levy. He has done very well, and attracted quite the following. I'm told his platoon now numbers near twenty and all have proclaimed themselves of your clan whether you know it or not. So your draft is well covered. There is the matter of the other portion of the levy I wish to address. Each community is required to provide the king and his army with supplies totalling no less than five percent of the value they are appraised at. These goods may be in food, though coin, weapons and armor are much preferred. Merchants will be dispatched with soldiers next year to pick up your portion. Should there not be enough room in the caravan for your goods, you may pay the remainder the next year, but at the increased appraisal value of your community."

"That is a bit steep but I suppose it must be done. We can handle five percent I think. Though sixty odd thousand ingots of goods may cost us dearly in other ways, what with the attacks here."

"Well, I'm afraid here is the bad news then. Agna claims you to be responsible for the start of the war and insisted that your holding be charged double the normal levy to compensate. The king, though somewhat skeptical of his motivations, is under severe pressure and hasn't disagreed with the decree. Though he hasn't necessarily sided with it either. You fortress has become somewhat of a common topic of discussion back in the mountainhomes and many approve of your work, though many also side with Agna in their dislike of your boldness."

"So ten percent then? We're to provide a hundred and twenty five thousand ingots worth of military supplies to the caravan by next year?" I was staggered. It could be done, certainly, but it accounted for over a third of our current armor and weapons, usable goblin gear included. It would leave us weakened without a doubt. My concern lasted only briefly however, we could manage such a feat, and Agna would rue the day he sided against my father yet. I still had to keep my word to Abba too, should she still be alive, and provide the humans with needed weapons. I nodded my acceptance of the terms and Vabosh and I shook hands before he departed. He gave me a sympathetic look but did give some hope with his words as he left.

"Don't worry too much. Since you were besieged while I was here I can attest to your effectiveness and the veracity of your previous numbers. The liason office will be impressed I am sure. It's even been said that the king requested a copy of my next report. So keep up the good work. 'Till we meet again."

I waved him away and then headed below. I need to speak to Aardvark. The forges would need to run long hours to keep up with demand, and our need for timber was even greater now. Hopefully the remainder of winter would be quiet.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 17, 2008, 03:46:20 pm**

14th of Obsidian Late winter

We've done precious little digging into the mountain itself as fortifying our position came foremost and exposed iron veins littered the cliffs next to our ramp. Mafol came to report today about the progress done on the lower portion of my current project. Things were coming along well, though I think I'll have to alter my plans somewhat. We'll see what happens when the time comes. Anyways, the miners found a rich vein of silver down below along one wall of my project. Removing the silver shouldn't affect things by my view and so I ordered it excavated. Also, Urvad have birth to another child today. A boy. Kids grow up so fast. Just the other day she was carrying her daughter into battle on her back tucked securely into a steel helmet and strapped in with leather. Now the lass is off sparring with her father in the barracks while Urvad does it all again with her son. I doubt we'll ever get that helmet back, but it brings joy to my heart to see the young family. It's for them that we do much of this. All of us shall someday pass on, but with luck and hard work the future will be a brighter place for our posterity. I could do my part for that future by eliminating as many goblins as possible.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 17, 2008, 04:23:03 pm**

1st of Granite 1055 So-called Spring

To the whistles and shrieks of a howling blizzard we celebrated our fifth spring here at Dorenemal, our fourth full year. It's amazing to see the place transformed into the stronghold it is. Half a dozen projects are being worked on in various stages of completion, but it still is home for us all. All eighty-six of us now. Counting the wee'uns of course. It was good to be in from the weather, though work continues outside despite it. It's still a neccessity for us at this point. Thikut, who's in charge of the woodcutters now, noted something interesting up near the upper plateau. A deposit of bituminous coal. It's not far from our current magnetite excavations so we may extend them over there to retrieve them as well. I've had some plans to improve our defenses as well, though it may take some time, especially with the impending levy being due. Our forges ring out night or day as long as someone is awake to work them.

The festivities tonight were spectacular. Fre has outdone herself this time. I fear I shall become fat with all the sublime food she makes. I'm sure the goblins will help me keep trim though. The dining hall was full and several had already begun to party early, Aardvark among them. It had been a good year, despite our losses, and everyone deserved a nice night of it though. The now-traditional speech went well enough, though short and to the point.

"Greetings to you all on this fine evening. We celebrate the fourth year since the founding of Dorenemal, our clan home and fortress. Welcome to all the newcomers, and an even heartier one to the rest of you, who through your labors, do not often see each other for weeks. We have done well as a clan and continue to grow, despite the opposition we face. Most of you are by now aware, but I wanted to make this official. The Big Knife tribe is now at war with the goblin tribes to the west and to the south. I'd like to thank the goblins for carving out much of this excellent fort we call home."

Scatterings of amused laughter.

"This year I would like to honor Ragnar in particular for organizing our defenses. For keeping us as safe as possible despite goblin attacks and sieges. Additional thanks and honor goes to those others that keep us safe, the fortress guard and the professional soldiers headed by Urvad, who looks like she's trying to raise an army the slow way. Ragnar, old friend, I'd thought of some things to present you with but we either lacked the material or you already had them. Name a boon then if you will, and if not I'll have something made for you just as soon as possible. So let's drink to Ragnar and his crew!"

The applause, cheering and drinking were thunderous. I too toasted their good health many times that night. Perhaps too much, though I couldn't resist having a mug of Sewerbrew with Ragnar himself.

((Feel free to request something if you'd like Ragnar, if not I've plans to make you a Nickel-silver weapon rack. I just lack a single bar unfortunately and can't make it from scratch. In any case, here's the four year update. For reference, I do plan on posting the maps when this place is done, and putting the seed out there as well, though I've plans to continue the story-line after this fort for a bit more. Once this fort is finished and the seed posted feel free to use it for a fort of your own. Just call your group the Walls of Zeal. Oh, and Kuli, you saw action at the last battle but I hadn't gotten around to getting a steel spear made for you so you used an axe. You'll be put to spearwork as soon as possible. I posted a description of Paulus as well. I've always thought it amusing that the last name he has means 'Papercarried' and that his personality fits so well what I imagine it being. Oh, and apparently being a legendary mechanic (due to artifact) makes you really really strong.))

Dwarf Fortress

Town Dorenemal, "Diamondsense"1st Granite, 1055, Early Spring

AnimalsKitchenStoneStocksJustice

Created Wealth:1343400*?Population:86

Weapons:30230*

Armor and Garb:376690*?

Furniture:96910*

Other Objects:234650*?

Architecture:289570*?

Displayed:73577*

Held/Worn:241730*?

Imported Wealth:560044*

Exported Wealth:11449*

Food Stores:1340?

MeatNoneSeeds698

FishNoneDrink266

Plant176Other195

Miners4

Woodworkers4

Stoneworkers9

Rangers1

Metalsmiths10

Jewelers1

Craftsdwarves9

Nobles/Admins1

PeasantsNone

Children8

Fishery Workers3

Farmers18

Engineers1

Trained AnimalsNone

Other Animals13

Deadwarves4

Axe LordsNone

Swordsdwarves1

SwordmastersNone

Macedwarves3

Mace LordsNone

HammerdwarvesNone

Hammer LordsNone

SpeardwarvesNone

SpearmastersNone

MarksdwarvesNone

Elite MrksdwrvsNone

Wrestlers6

Elite Wrestlers2

Recruits1

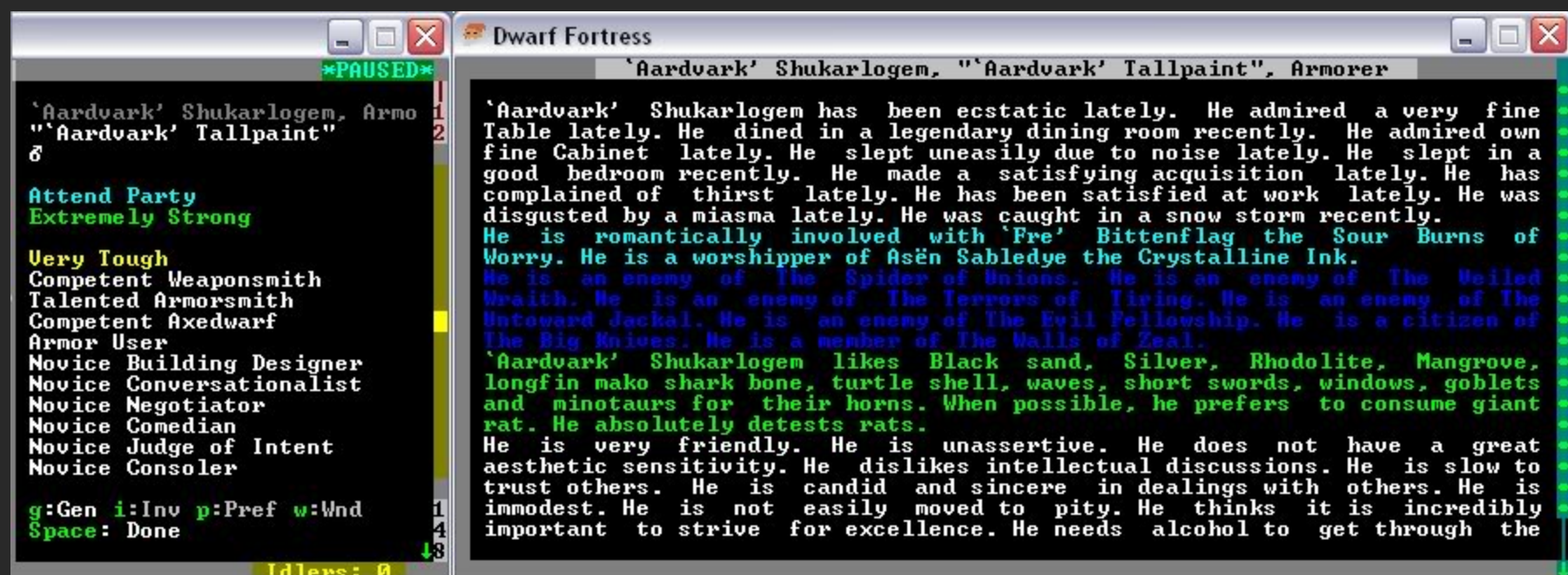


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*PAUSED*
'Fre' Nitigsolon Zuneknïng Bumal
'"Fre' Bittenflag the Sour B
♀

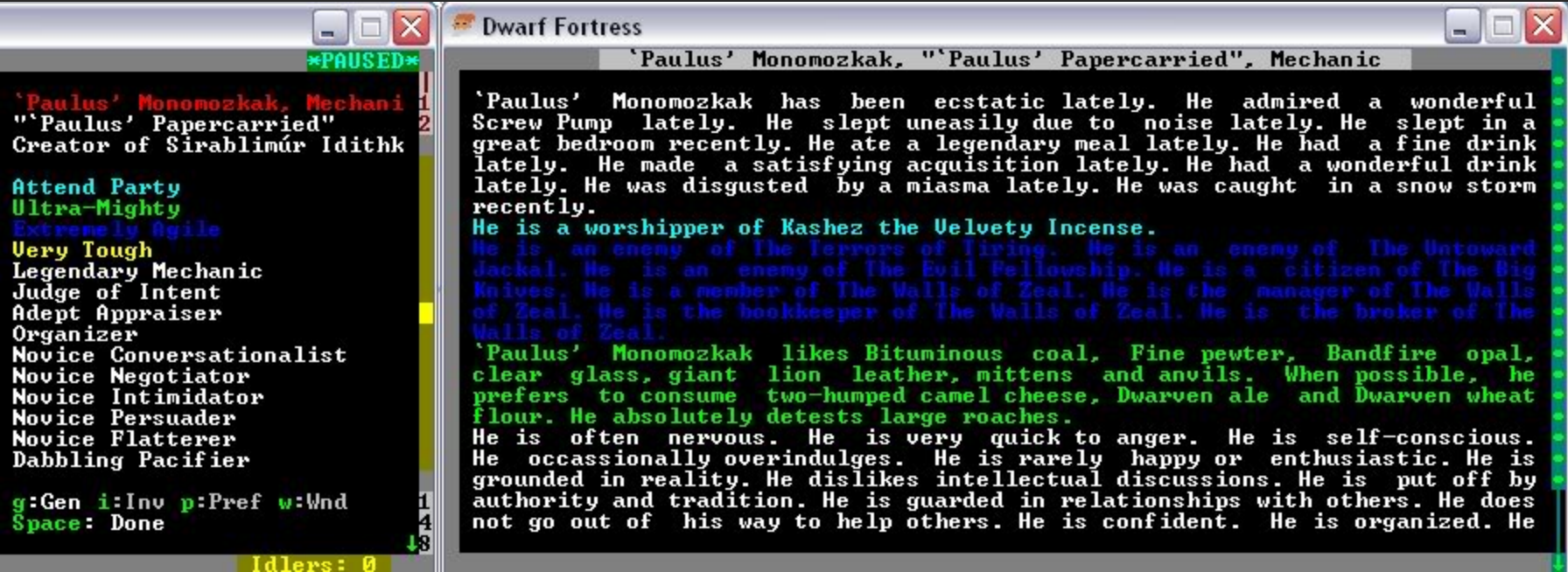
Attend Party
Very Strong
Extremely Agile
Tough
Talented Cook
Skilled Grower
Proficient Marksdwarf
Armor User
Proficient Herbalist
Dabbling Pacifier
Dabbling Negotiator
Dabbling Comedian
Dabbling Conversationalist
Dabbling Persuader

g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd
Space: Done

Idlers: 0
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((Aardvark please note your current job... ;)))



((Fre notice how happy I am with your cooking! If I'm not careful I'll be +Stout+))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **July 17, 2008, 05:25:32 pm**

Aardvarks Log

2nd Granite 1055

Agh, my head. The party yesterday was great. I am always looking forward to these parties we have each year, and I am particularly happy for Ragnar. He has done a fantastic job keeping us safe. Now that the now year has started it is probably time to start producing the equipment for this new levy that has come. May the gods smite the Noble acusing us for starting this war. I hope a Hydra gets to him before any of my crafts may reach him. Anyways in time my skills shall be known through the Kingdom. I have started to add my insignia to each item, nothing big, just my initials inside a short swords blade. Hopefully it will become a sign of exeptional quality.

For the Fahlstrom Clan

[OOC]
I hope he is creating some weaponry to, armor only gets you that far.
[/OOC]

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **DarkMagnus** on **July 17, 2008, 09:12:23 pm**

With a slight bow of his head, Ragnar stood tall among his fellow dwarves- and setting down his mug, stood upon his stone chair. The room, moments ago drenched in shouts of celebration, fell to a hush. He raised his calloused hands and roared.

"Brothers and Sisters!"

Aye, came the reply.

"In the goblin'omes did we build our keep- and woz it a mighty place?"

Aye, again.

"And 'id they fall?!"

Aye! the refrain.

"Twice they 'ave sieged us, an' many more 'ave they struck! I have been there in me flesh, and heard the beasts' growls in me bones. An' seen the 'onered dead, 'ave I! 'ave ye?!"

AYE! a louder noise could scarcely be imagined.

"They 'ave taken from us more than th' beasts 'emselves could know."

A silence, for remembrance, and then-

"AND DID WE FALL?!"

NAY! the walls shook.

"The blood o' me brothers lies soaked in me skin-
And dream I of place where 'ey sleep
Yet 'ey fight at me side in the battle's red tide-
And keep watch o'er D'renemal Keep!"

And after this, Ragnar spoke no more, and the celebration continued, not in his honor, or the honor of the brave dead, but in honor of all.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Kuli** on **July 17, 2008, 09:36:04 pm**

Thanks for adding me, Paulus. But the name Dancetreaties sounds a little *elvish*, doesn't it? Ha ha.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 18, 2008, 11:39:47 am**

((Hey... not my fault. Ragnar likes Fairies for their babylike giggles... but you don't see anyone harrassing him about that... ;)))

16th of Granite

Zefon one of our recent additions and a farmer gave birth to a boy today. I told her to take the rest of the day off. She was too busy chasing after the tyke to pay much attention to me anyways though.

Also, the elves have arrived again, and though their supplies were a nice addition, and they relieved us of some of the clutter they brought little of true use. A few bags, some nice drink and barrels and more fresh produce and fruit. All useful items to be sure, but nothing we could do without at this point. I thanked them for making the trip and they assured us they valued our stonework, and that we didn't participate in wholesale slaughter in their presence this year. I tried to explain that that hadn't been my fault but they seemed to think I was joking and didn't find it funny. I suppose their sense of humor is different than ours. Of course the sight of a goblin flying off a 150 foot drop would get any group of dwarves grinning and laughing.

As expected they were tailed again by a pair of kobold thieves. One of them was caught on the ramp by an engraver of ours and promptly brained. The other managed to evade our clutches and escape. Perhaps my plans can eliminate that in the future.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 18, 2008, 12:14:07 pm**

13th of Slate early spring here 1055

A few days ago one of our woodcutters came up with a brilliant idea. Or so he says. He wouldn't say what it was, just kept asking for things. Like wood, and stone and turtle shells. Speaking of which, we seem to have precious few of those considering we've been fishing for turtles in the ponds for years. I'll have to look into that, especially since our esteemed mayor insists we make some things from it for her.

The big news today, however, is that we received immigrants. From the capital. Apparently we've drawn quite a bit of attention since at the head of the column was the Baroness Lokum Ralkubuk with her consort. It had been made official. We were now a barony under her direction. I groaned as I called below requesting Lord Rovod's presence topside. A grim faced Hammerer strode behind her and her consort, who looked to be complaining even from this distance. And behind them came a smallish dwarf carrying a sheaf of papers in each arm. I groaned again. A tax collector. Had we become that prosperous already?

Lord Rovod joined me at our entrance, wiping the soot from the smithy from his hands. I knew Aardvark didn't appreciate his meddling. Lord Rovod intended well, but he simply wasn't the best at working metal. Despite that he insisted on trying to make weapons, armor and whatnot from time to time, taking the forge over from those more skilled. At least he was good enough to spend considerable time at the smelters making the barstock as well.

He bowed low as the Baroness approached, I simply bowed, somewhat stiffly.

"Greetings Lady Lokum. It has been some time since I've seen you. I haven't been to the capital in years I'm afraid, but be welcome at our holding."

"Lord Rovod, a pleasure. Though I am now Baroness Lokum. I have been appointed by the king to come here and ensure that the holding remain loyal to the tribe and it's kingdom."

"Ah, Baroness then. You'll not have to worry about our loyalties, to be sure. Won't you come in? We've got rooms suitable for you already, let us simply select appropriate furniture for your tastes and you can begin unpacking."

Even the Baroness' consort looked surprised. But the Baroness quickly recovered.

"Well, I must say, that's a surprise. I was half expecting to wait for a few months until suitable rooms were made for us." She looked at her consort somewhat sharply as if to say 'I told you so' and allowed herself to be escorted in by Lord Rovod.

The Hammerer and tax collector joined me at the gate and I greeted them as well.

"Don't worry, we've got rooms for you two as well. We needed more stone so I had extra excavated below. In fact we've got rooms enough for all that came with you, though I think I might need to have a few more beds made."

The Hammerer looked pleased. "Thank you Holder Paulus, it's nice to see you keep the place well organized. I value that. Disorder is the first sign of lawlessness I always say. And I'll not be tolerating any of that."

I grabbed a sheaf of papers from Tax collector and escorted both below, requesting furniture to be placed in their rooms according to their needs. The Tax collector handed me a small piece of paper containing a tally of immigrants that were with them. A large group apparently. I'll have to meet with them all later but based on what I was given, which I've transcribed below, we received:

- 1 Mason
- 1 Leatherworker (perhaps I'll assign him to the army)
- 1 Glassmaker
- 2 Cooks (one the personal cook of the Baroness. I've assured her Fre is more talented than anyone she could possibly have brought and after sampling some of Fre's better cooking she agreed, allowing me to draft her cook into the Royal guard as a fitting honor for him.)
- 4 Peasants (all fortress or Royal guard now)
- 1 Cheesemaker (also drafted)
- 1 Hammerdwarf (Indicated he would like to speak to me personally later, but assigned to the military)
- 1 Pump Operator (See below)
- 1 Mechanic (a dwarf after my own heart. Not that we need too much of that, so I've begun training them and another from the previous group in the arts of Siege. All three will be operators and two engineers as well. In addition to their other duties of course.)
- 1 Craftdwarf A dabbler in everything if I ever saw one, but still useful enough
- 1 Brewer
- 1 Ranger Now helps Led
- 1 Herbalist now farmer also
- 1 Fish cleaner now Guard
- 2 children
- 1 Gemsetter

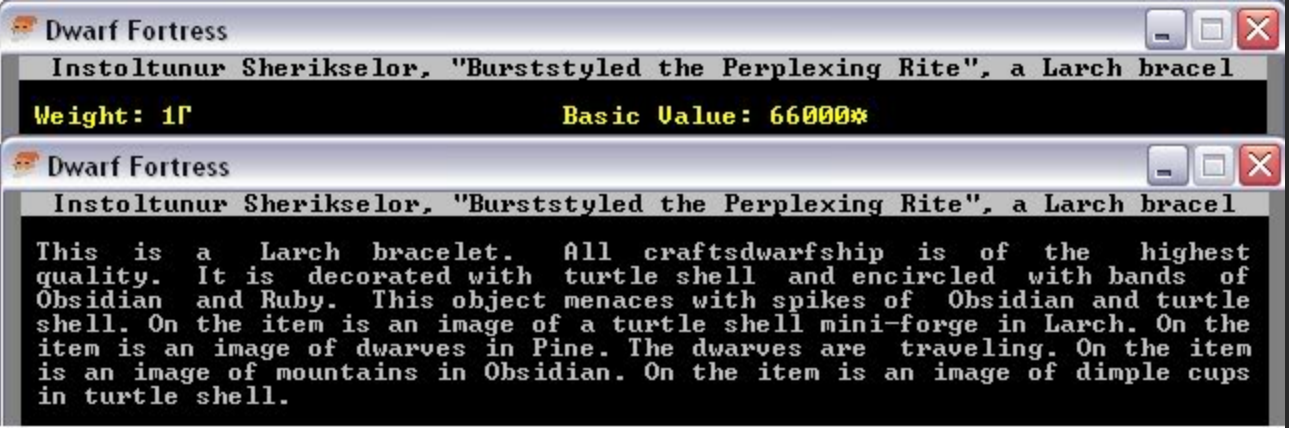
totalling twenty five dwarves in all to join us, pushing our numbers over a hundred. No wonder the king sent someone to keep an eye out. If I could arm and equip the entire fortress population with steel we'd have an army to rival any.

P.S. The tax collector seems especially accommodating. I find I like the dwarf, despite his position. I was surprised at first, but according to him it was the king himself that selected those that came this time. Apparently the Baroness is the King's consort's sister. She too seems pleasant enough, though her consort tends to be somewhat negative, despite his chatty nature. I think I'll have to avoid him lest I be tempted to imbed his teeth further into his mouth. Already I've heard complaints and exclamations like "I thought this place would be full of hovels, garbage and stone cluttering the walkways" and other such rot. Of course, having one of our masons braining a kobold on the ramp as they entered probably hadn't helped the matter.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 18, 2008, 06:20:15 pm**

21st of Slate

Our woodcarver Kikrost finished his construction. It too seems to fit eerily with the other artifact the the goddess. There is a message contained on it I feel, but what it is I'm not sure. Kikrost has called it Instoltunur Sherikselor, or Burststyled the Perplexing Rite. He certainly got the perplexing part correct. The forge I understand, as I do the dwarves and the mountain. I believe they represent our coming here and founding this place, but the final image, that which is yet unknown indeed perplexes me. Still, we have been bountifully blessed by Avuz with iron and steel, for which I'm sure we are grateful.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 18, 2008, 06:35:51 pm**

28th of Slate 1055

I was in my office discussing the guard situation with Ragnar when we were interrupted by the Baroness. Ragnar had come to discuss the recent increase in injuries received during sparring session. It seems that two of the royal guard and one of the fortress guard had fractured their arms. Looking at the preference in armors I could see why. The Royal guard had insisted on wearing the more comfortable and stylish leather armors we had instead of the Steel chain of the guard or the steel plate the soldiers wore. We had just finished discussing outfitting all combat personell with plate when the Baroness paid her social call.

"Ah, Paulus, Ragnar. Good. I wanted to complement you on the progress being made to further defend this place. Adding iron gates at the outer perimeters should certainly keep us safer. I know I'll feel better. In any case, I wanted to request a few things. My husband and I both are really fond of lay pewter, so we'd like you to see what you can do with some of it. Three objects should be sufficient for now. We wanted to gauge the level of crafts dwarfship with it."

"Lay pewter?"

"Oh, yes. We saw a few bars of Fine pewter and trifle pewter so we figured it shouldn't be a problem. Anyways, thank you. And keep up the good work with the defenses you two."

She exited almost as quick as she had come. I only hoped she was a patient sort. We had no lay pewter. The other bars I had traded for. Nor did we, I was pretty sure, have the materials to make them with. All we'd found so far in this place was iron, but we had it in spades. Ragnar gave me a funny look.

"What'd she mean outer gates? What'd we need them fer? How on earth can we get the practice we need if you don't even let the greenskins get to us?"

I laughed and stood.

"Ragnar, you worry too much. She just made an understandable mistake, one I'm counting on the goblins making as well."

"Oh, and what's that, eh?"

"Those gates aren't there to keep the goblins out."

I grinned.

"They're there to keep them from being able to run away."

Ragnar grinned too as we left my office each heading to our separate duties.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Dr. Melon** on **July 19, 2008, 03:47:30 pm**

I'd like to join in, if that's okay!

Name: Melonius Greenback The Fifth
Gender: Male pref, female okay if no other slot available.
Profession: Gemsetter

Weapon Preference: Marks dwarf; if not available, Siege Engineer or Swords dwarf.
A somewhat shadowy past of a somewhat shadowy Dwarf; he does not go in for alcohol much. Rumoured to be an escaped criminal or lunatic, he denotes himself of high lineage.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 21, 2008, 12:51:03 pm**

28th of Slate

Progress on my grand project goes slowly, which I suppose is just as well, since I've had to scrap my designs and have begun drawing them up again from scratch. We struck another vein while working on it. This one of Cassierite. And plenty of it. At least fifty bars worth of tin from the looks of it. Perhaps closer to eighty in actuality. The masons are still working topside on the other half so I think I'll probably just have the miners halt work on the other part for now, until they're needed. It may be time for us to begin some exploratory mining below anyways.

Ragnar came in with some disturbing news. Apparently one of the most recent immigrants is not who he claimed to be. One of our fellow dwarves happened to recognize him from the mountainhomes and spoke with Ragnar about it. Apparently the dwarf had been in trouble with the Guard back in the mountainhome, some trumped up claims of being descended from nobility, claims of entitlement, blah, blah, blah.

I suggested that Ragnar keep a close eye on him for any signs of trouble. I certainly didn't want another of Agna's spies around here, though with all the recent immigrants it was more than likely we already had at least one. I've spoken with the dwarf that claimed to have known of him and gotten as much information as I could about this character. As long as he was loyal I suppose he could live. I've included the information below for future reference should it be needed.



((Worked out well, you even prefer to consume dwarven milk.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 21, 2008, 12:54:46 pm**

15th of Felsite

Our population remained unchanged today.

Nish, one of our guards gave birth to a girl.

Unfortunately, Asmel, one of our more talented stonecrafters perished. He broke through the ice, mistakenly assuming it was solid enough. We're in the process of recovering his corpse for burial but with the spring rains draining the lake may take some time. If they weren't such great sources of food, especially turtle, I'd consider just paving them over or draining and capping them.

((And just so you guys know I tend to be busy on weekends and don't post much then))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 21, 2008, 01:29:35 pm**

17th of Hematite early summer

The human traders arrived today. Strangely enough a kobold thief arrived before them. It was brained by a mason on the ramp. I should have known that something was up though. They rarely came all by themselves now. A diplomat arrived with the caravan. Some human Baroness. Thank goodness such meetings were no longer my domain. Heh. At least the Baroness Lokum would have to deal with her. The two exchanged pleasantries while I began having folks bring up supplies to trade with. It was just as well the Baroness was tied up in meetings. I'd prefer she not know of any arrangements I'd made with Abba. In light of our recent declaration of war trading weapons with humans might not be looked upon favorably. Abba looked somewhat dour when I greeted her.

"Hoy, Trader Abba. A pleasure to see you as always. We were concerned you'd had a spot of trouble last year when you didn't come."

"Paulus, good to see you. Understandable, I'm sorry about last year. We tried to make it through, we really did. But the declaration of war and the levy arrived in Gusilnakis just after us. The bloody Duke there confiscated our goods, claiming that it was needed for the war effort. They paid us a little for it, but it was a pittance of it's true value. None of the other merchants had their goods touched. And they wouldn't even let us press on with our route. Said the roads were closed to the south due to goblin activity. Said Dorenemal was besieged or somesuch. I'm glad you pulled through it all right. I saw the new gate as I was coming in. Impressive work."

"Aye, we did well enough. We just finished a like gate on the west side too. Sorry to hear about your trading losses."

"Hmm. Well, trading has been rough these last few year. Profits have been cut drastically, more so since I've had to resort to greasing palms just to keep my goods from getting taken."

"Were ye able to find my brother?"

"Oh, yeah. We found him in the capital. Took some doing too. But he appreciated the gift I can assure you. It was lucky we found him, he was being sent to a front within the week. But please don't ask me to do that again. Word got around somehow that we'd been helping you and trading in the capital last year went terribly. Only a few wanted to trade with us, and most seemed outright scared to. I'd say you have some powerful enemies."

"Aye, well, that's true enough. You headed south still after this stop then?"

"Yup, probably. Unless you buy everything off of me. Then I'll head east to the human settlements to resupply at a guild office."

"Well, I certainly appreciate what you've done, and I haven't forgotten what I've promised. Let's see what you've got first and get that out of the way."

They had almost all that we had asked for two years ago. It was a nice addition to our supplies. I was hoping that they'd brought a few bars of lead. I could use it to make lay pewter but such luck was not with me. They didn't even have nickel. Abba noticed my disappointment and asked about it. I told her, and she was quick to point out that I hadn't requested anything like that. Certainly true. It was not her fault and I knew that as well. But I still could hope.

In the end we did wind up taking almost everything they had. They'd brought some human armor and clothing but that did us little good since it wouldn't fit. We did take their bars of metal, plenty of food, including lots of fresh seafood and drink. They brought wood and barrels as well. For which I was grateful. I had a lot of goblin gear hauled up to barter with.

"I know I told ye I'd be more than willing to trade weapons, and I won't go back on my word. But it does put me in quite a spot."

"I'd imagined as much. I requested a diplomat this year to help avoid problems with that. She'll keep the nobles here occupied while we trade. But I do understand. If we were to be stopped by a dwarf patrol in the hills we'd likely have all dwarf armor and weapons confiscated for 'the good of the kingdom'. How about this though... they can't lay claim on weapons my guards are carrying for personal use. Not without serious repercussions."

"Hmm, well then... Heh. Let's to do this. How many guards to ye have?" I made a quick count. "Aye, well, I'm sure we've got sufficient steel to spare to arm them fully. I've had Aardvark and his crew working hard over the winter."

I broke out a bin of weapons and passed out several steel warhammers and axes among the caravan guards. Last of all I handed Abba a finely crafted steel shortsword.

"This one's for ye personally. One of the best made so far. Perhaps next year we'll be able to do more, once we've gotten this levy thing out of the way. But I'm sure we can see you off properly with other gear. We've got lots of goblin gear here we can't use, including iron armor. You could take it back to have it melted down for your own use at the very least. We'll even cover your losses from last year."

We loaded up their wagons with all the goblin gear we had brought up from below. In the end it was over a hundred thousand ingots worth of profit after what we'd purchased from them, not including the steel weapons. They'd helped us out of a bind, and had delivered a message to my brother at significant personal cost. Making that up to them was the least we could do. Abba was ecstatic with the deal and with a twinkle in her eye she promised she'd be back next year, no matter how many people she needed to bribe.

I was sure we've have more goblin gear to give her. And we'd see them properly armed as they left. They were our allies against the goblins. It simply made sense to do it that way. As they left the Baronesses emerged from below, the human spouting gratitude for the visit, Lokum appearing tired and anxious to see this nuisance off. It looked like royalty had a use after all. That was one meeting I was glad to avoid.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 21, 2008, 02:52:37 pm**

27th of Malachite

Avuz has indeed blessed us amply in this place. The miners finally began excavation of the main shafts for exploration and already found a vein of Galena and one of Bismuthinite. That means lead! The Baroness shall have her lay pewter. They also found a large cluster of emeralds and kunzite, right next to each other.

On the other hand Litast's mandate to make turtle shell items passed. We were unable to comply to the request she had made since the last three shells were used by Kikrost in the making of Instoltunur. She didn't really want to follow through with the punishment process but with the new Hammerer overseeing things it had to be done. In the end she gave our bonecrafter the minimum sentence. A single hammerstroke. She feels terrible about it. I assured her I would do my best to see that our crafts dwarf was wearing armor when it happened. This practice has plenty of precedent and the law doesn't specify that the dwarf receiving punishment can't be armored. In fact, it's almost common in cases where the manager has to comply with the law but feels it isn't warranted to armor the convicted. In cases where it is well and truly deserved such protection is generally not allowed, ensuring both justice and a measure of mercy take place. Still, I hope he survives the blow. Many would not, and our Hammerer looks to take her work seriously.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Dr. Melon** on **July 21, 2008, 03:48:42 pm**

The character I've landed with is perfect! Great choice!

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 22, 2008, 11:56:51 am**

9th of Limestone

The dwarven caravan arrived today. Six wagons and a bunch of pack animals. We're not ready for them. Rather I should say, we can pay the levy required of us but it would leave us stripped of armor and weapons, something I am not willing to permit. I have a plan though, and though it might not be viewed favorably, it is within the legality of the levy. In any case, Vabosh met with the Baroness Lokum instead of me to go over the numbers and whatnot. I assume he'll join me for the levy. The merchants seemed unhappy about the whole situation as well. They don't appreciate their wagons being commandeered to ferry goods that aren't their own. Perhaps my solution will work well for them also.

"Welcome again. I hope ye had a good trip."

"Aye, well safe enough anyhow. The extra patrols the king has sent out to escort the merchants and ensure the security of the levies has helped to be sure."

"That's nice. Can I see a list of what you've brought?"

"A list? Um... sure. Let me find it." He began rummaging through some papers in his satchel. I knew most merchants kept an inventory of what they had and where it was obtained and for how much. It was simply good business. "Ah, here we go."

I perused the list. There was much there that was unnecessary, and even some very expensive pieces. One such was a stack of steel bolts. Not high quality in and of themselves, but they were well decorated and were selling for about thirty five thousand ingots. Way to much for a stack of normal bolts, but I tried anyways.

"I'll take the lot of it."

"What? You want everything? I suppose we can do that if you have enough goods to barter with. I'll not take anything covered by the levy though. I don't want it confiscated. The goods I have are worth just over one hundred and eighty thousand ingots though."

"Aye, let me have the stuff hauled up and you can double-check and tally things as we load it."

I began filling the wagons, hoping desperately that we'd have enough junk to fill them most of the way, and that our levy would cover the rest. I was pleasantly surprised. Volume wise the wagons weren't brimming, but they were creaking under the load of the goblin armors, most of the ones we had being metal. By the end, almost all the wagons and animals were full, only about six thousand stone weight could be easily added, and we hadn't even gotten to the levy.

"How's that then? Should give ye about 40000 profit ta boot."

"With what you have to trade I can't see you getting all the items you want."

"Hmph. It's a fair trade and ye know it. But if you're going to be like that you can keep those bolts. No one in their right mind pays that much for some shoddy quality bolts anyways."

The merchant grinned ecstatically. By my calculations he was coming away with about 70000 ingots worth of profit. A good trip by any measure.

By the time Vabosh had finished his meeting I'd already chosen what we'd be sending for the levy, with what little room there was left on the wagons.

"Hoy Vabosh, hope the meeting went well." He grunted.

"Well, enough I suppose. So let's get to the business of the levy."

"Can do. I've got some bins of material for the levy set aside here, but there doesn't seem to be room enough for all of it."

He looked at me skeptically and examined the wagons. I tried not to smile.

"Aye, true enough. Well, fill it with what you can and you'll just have to hope there's more room next year."

I had fifteen iron shields loaded up and that topped off the wagons nicely. They were only valued at just over two thousand ingots though.

"Well, by my estimates your holding is now worth just under two million ingots, so with what you've paid you still owe about a hundred and ninety thousand ingots for next year." He made some notes in his ledgers as the merchants prepared to leave. He handed me a slip of paper before departing himself.

"Here's what we really need for next year. Crossbows and ammo, short swords, battle axes, armor of course. I understand what ye did, though perhaps not why. You're taking a great risk though putting it off like that."

"Aye, I'm aware. But I'd be taking a great risk paying it this year as well. Paying it now leaves us largely unprotected and if we're attacked again I'd prefer to be armored than have my debts squared. We'll have it for next year though for sure."

"Well, see that you do. I'd not recommend trying a stunt like this again though."

"I'm not sure we could. Still, what the merchants are taking should be useful enough. There's at least a hundred bars worth of iron in those wagons if it were melted down. Some of it could be easily modified to fit as well, though it might take more work that way. We'll come up with the rest next year, don't worry."

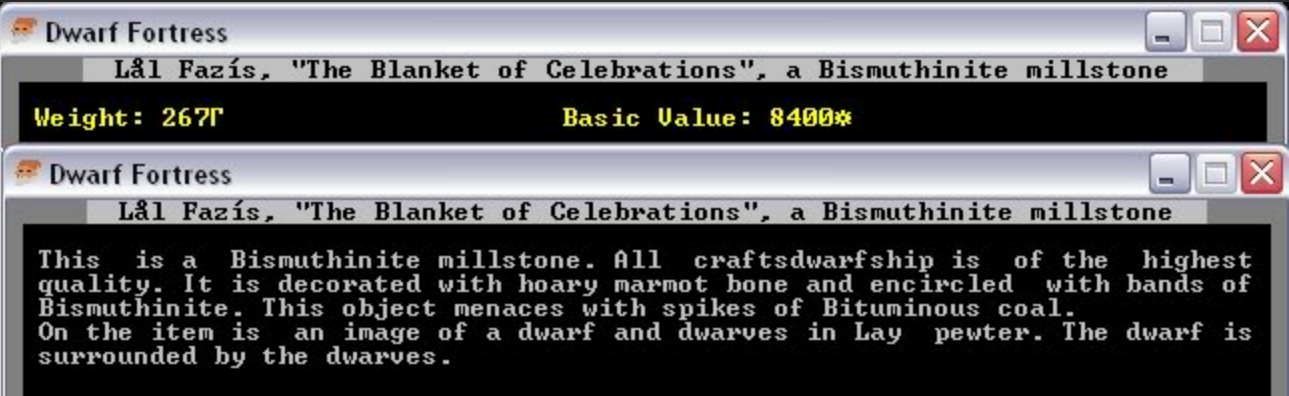
Despite my assurances he did look concerned. Nearly two hundred thousand ingots was no trifling matter. I felt confident we could make that though, assuming our fuel supply held. It had been a stall tactic on our part and I hoped we could get away with it. Only time would tell I supposed.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 22, 2008, 01:31:39 pm**

28th of Limestone

One of our Masons apparently decided to please the nobles with his brilliant idea today. He claimed a workshop and began gathering materials. He took some Bismuthinite, Bituminous coal, Lay pewter and Marmot bones. I have no idea what he's making as he won't say, just keeps repeating the words 'Lal Fazis' to himself.

P.S. He is done. I almost laughed when I saw it. It is a Bismuthinite Millstone. Not that we have a mill. But it has an image of a dwarf surrounded by dwarves in lay pewter that he claims he made specifically for the Baroness and her consort. Perhaps I'll have it installed in their room just for fun. I can't imagine using it for anything else. Seems like a waste of good Bituminous coal to me. Of course, that stuff is fascinating. I won't expound on it's intricacies here, but it is, in my opinion, one of the more magnificent minerals in the crust.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 22, 2008, 05:40:04 pm**

9th of Sandstone

Our roster of injured seems to be mounting. When I last checked we had at least seven injured individuals. Four of which are royal guard. Thankfully the Baroness doesn't see fit to replace those that are wounded with more active individual else our military ranks would be decimated. Two are of the fortress guard. All of which have been wearing at least steel chain. Perhaps we can improve that to plate in the future but we're simply too busy at the moment. The other injury is one of our craftsddwarves. He survived the hammerstrike but I fear he may remain injured for some time. The blow seems to have nearly crushed his upper right leg. He can't stand on it at all. All the injured are doing well enough though, as long as I remember to bring them food and water.

In other unfortunate news we've run out of wood for our woodburners. I've no doubt that despite the sixty of so charcoal we've stockpiled Aardvark and his crew will burn through what we have in less than a month. We've already re-harvested the upper plateau and central one despite it being too early for such activity. We have no choice but to take what timber we can find on the lower plateau as well now. I've decided it's time to convert the bituminous coal into coke now, and that should help bolster the fuel supply, but it seems a shame to use it so. We're still working on extracting it and I think I've seen a lignite deposit on the upper plateau near the waterfall. Perhaps we'll have to resort to using that as well.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 22, 2008, 06:50:05 pm**

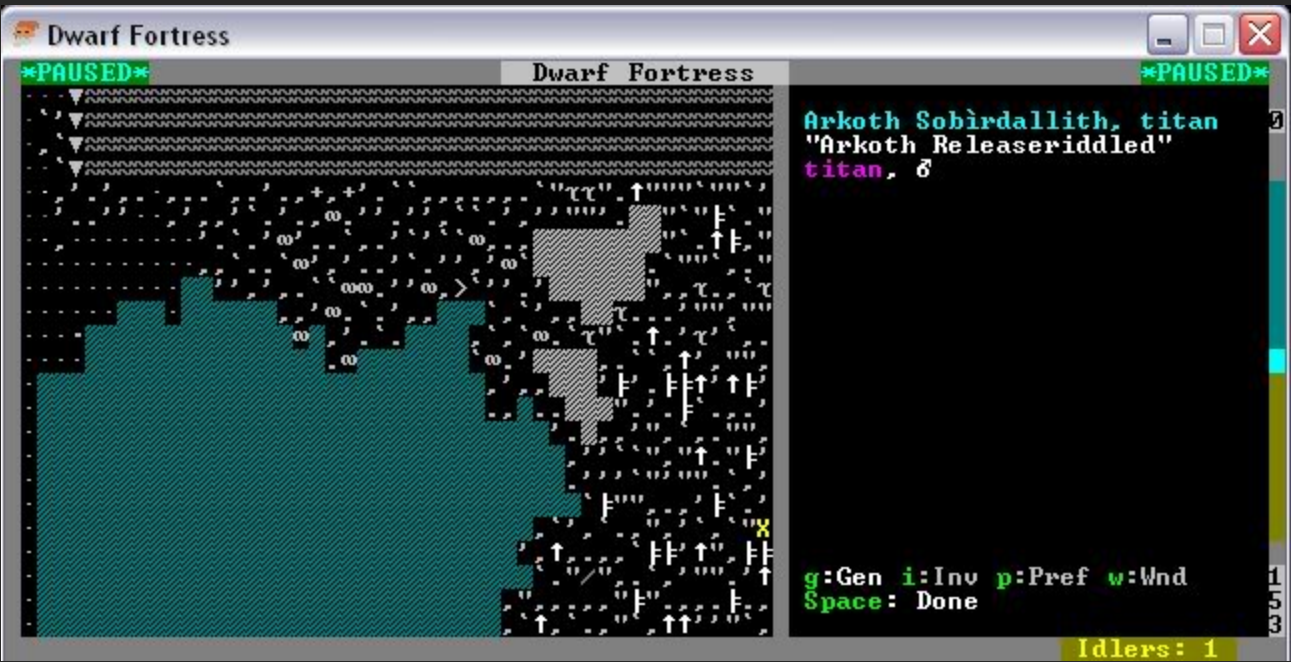
21st of Sandstone Mid-winter

Today we toasted to three of our own that have risen in their skills to pass the test of Champion. Few there are that manage that, and to have three pass in quick succession is a boon to our fortress. Many perceive champions as the true defenders of the mountainhomes, despite the efforts and blood of dwarves of lesser skill. Urvad was the first, ranking top marks in both axe and shield, followed by Tosid and Fath, both in sword. Our Hammerer presided over the challenges to ensure fairness and she seemed content with their skills. Perhaps I can trace the injuries caused to the guards now, though I'll certainly not hold it against them. I too feel at times that I could benefit from some more formal martial training but my other duties leave me constantly busy with meetings and tending the injured. Perhaps I'll make time sometime soon.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 22, 2008, 09:30:28 pm**

26th of Moonstone Winter

I was tending the injured again today when the alarm was sounded. Our woodcutters on the southern plateau had spotted a large humanoid coming from the east. We got everyone in in time, but only just. It was a Titan.



He chased our woodcutters to almost to the gates before stopping and bellowing.

"I am Arkoth Sobirdallith. The name of Dorenemal is spoken among the Titans and I have come to challenge the Champions of this place."

We certainly didn't want him starting to tear the place apart. Ragnar, myself and two of our champions, Fath and Tosid geared up just outside our gate to parlay with the creature.

"What are your conditions?"

"We fight to the death. If I win you all are my slaves. Send the three champions out to fight."

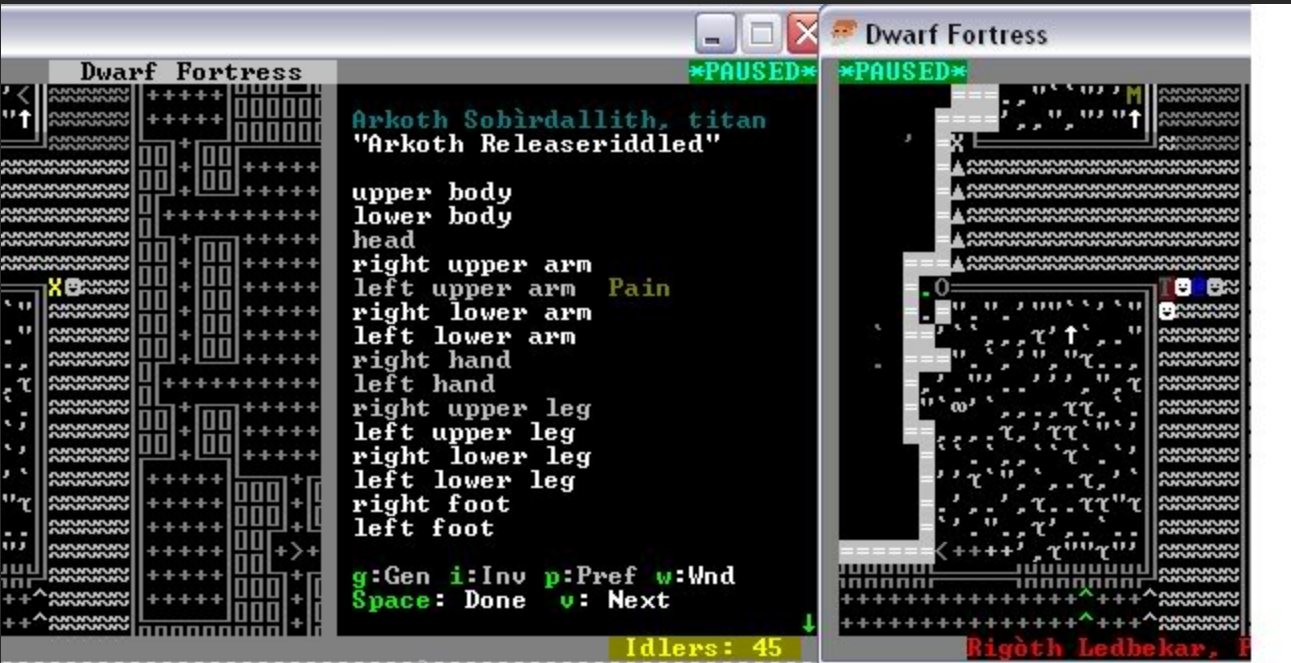
The four of us stood resolute as the wind picked up, bringing with it small snow flurries. My breath fogged the air before me.

"Two are here. The third is busy and can't come at the moment. Would you accept the two of us in her place?"

He grinned. "Two more dwarves to smash? Let us fight then."

The giant of a creature charged swiftly, rapidly closing the distance on the four steel-clad midgets. Three of them had swords, one an axe. Arkoth grinned. He preferred to wrestle, and with his skill he knew their weapons would be of little use once he got close enough. The dwarf in the lead he reached out and slammed into the ground as they met, stunning the creature and putting it flat. But not before it had cut him. The others swung their weapons and scored minor hits. Mere cuts and scrapes, no serious damage and the Titan laughed. Arkoth swung out and send another dwarf scurrying away from his blow. To his surprise one of the dwarves with a sword (Fath) launched himself at the titan, tackling it in the legs and holding on. Titan and dwarf locked in each other's grasp, neither relinquishing ground. Then the second dwarf jumped in, grabbing an arm and holding tight. Still the Titan knew no fear as he lashed out with his good arm, sending a dwarf flying into the obsidian wall nearby. It was when the third dwarf, the one with an axe, tackled him he felt the first fleeting doubts. The dwarves did not give up or flee, they too were fearless. His blows, while fierce, were not telling with their armor and he began to doubt the wisdom of coming here to challenge this newly founded city. The axedwarf barreled into his chest and both fell stunned, dwarf on top of the Titan, while the other two fiercely clung on and impeded his movement. By the time the fourth dwarf jumped on and pinned his other arm with uncanny strength for one so small the Titan began to suspect that his kin would only hear of his defeat. It infuriated him and he struggled harder, pitting his strength against the four from Dorenemal. The struggle lasted minutes, then an hour, then two. Neither side delivering telling blows, neither side able to gain an advantage. The giant felt his strength begin to ebb, and still the tireless dwarves fought on. When the largest of the four, the axedwarf slipped around behind him the Titan knew his end had come. He fought valiantly on to the end, until blackness engulfed his vision and a rushing filled his ears and he knew no more.

So perished Arkoth Sobirdallith, the Titan, to the defenders of Dorenemal. Hardly a scratch marred his body, yet still he had lost the fight in the end.



((The pic on the left side is mid battle before I could rejoin the others. We literally all piled on top of him. After the battle is on the right. Fath and Tosid in white, Ragnar in blue, me in grey. Uvash was asleep and the others mid-crafting.))

The Baroness Lokum gave birth to a baby boy today. We've congratulated her. Perhaps now is a good time to take care of anything we don't want her to see...

Also, Aardvark came by today to let me know that they're running low of steel bars. We've only had one smelter working on steel, the other was working through the veins of other metals, like silver, lead and tin, as well as the coal. I'll have to see if I can shuffle around some things and get some more steel made. I had requested some ballista arrows for the entrance made of steel. I'll have to see about canceling those if we're short.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 23, 2008, 10:03:18 pm**

3rd of Obsidian

Our craftsdwarf, Stukos, with the broken leg has fallen into a melancholy. Despite receiving food and water regularly he was apparently unable to sleep due to the pain. He's up now though, and dragging his mangled leg with him as he goes moping about the fortress. He does not look well and I fear this may not bode well for him.

On a more positive note we had a child of one of our fortress guards come of age recently. I wish I could remember their name. He had a choice of what he wanted to do and opted to join the military like his father.

Urvad as well gave birth again. Another healthy baby boy. I swear, just as soon as one grows out of that helmet-sling she fills it right back up. This is the third of her's that I know of, and if I remember correctly her and her husband had at least one or two when they arrived from Kilrudmorul. Still, and child of hers is more than welcome. Perhaps I'll accuse her of trying to fill out the army herself.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 24, 2008, 11:15:16 am**

15th of Obsidian

The Baroness walked into my office today and kicked Fath, one of our glassmakers, out so she could talk to me.

"Paulus, I'm not happy with this situation. Not happy."

"Um... what situation?"

"The lord Rovod has a better tomb than I do. I find that quite perturbing. I want you to make improvements to my tomb. And put something nice in it."

She then stalked out. I gave a sigh as she left. There was nothing wrong with her tomb, nevertheless I went to go meet with the stoneworkers to let them know they should engrave it for her. As far as her demand that I put an item in it, I was at a loss where to begin. Lay pewter came to mind, so I'd have to see if that made her happy.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 24, 2008, 05:28:08 pm**

1st of Granite 1056

Well, 'tis a new year. I was surprised today when the Baroness came stomping into my office all in a huff. Apparently she had just met with the elven ambassador, who in a matter of minutes managed to insult her three times. She informed me that he had commented that we were, in his words, 'disrespecting the trees', but that that was what he had come to expect from such savages as us. She told me to keep up the good work.

As it is we're continually short of fuel and we've had to relog all of the areas well before their proper time, which is unfortunate. We've recently finished re-logging the north upper plateau and may have to give the woodcutters a break to let some of the smaller trees in other areas grow back. In any case, with the steel production being at a low point as well, I've dismissed half the forging crew to other activities for the time being. Aardvark expressed some interest in healty excercise and training with the guard a little, as long as it wasn't Fath, Tosid, Urvad or Ragnar. Heh, I think he's worried of going the way of half the Royal guard around this place.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 24, 2008, 06:33:47 pm**

9th of Granite 1056

Stukos Mamotmeng, our craftsdwarf died today of thirst. He would take no water or food in his melancholy state. It's a shame such a thing happened, but our mayor, the young lass is coping well. Or perhaps after having spoken with so many and heard so many complaints she is becoming somewhat hardened to the realities of life. He was buried in a proper coffin though, and fitting tribute was paid.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 25, 2008, 10:52:06 am**

11th of Granite late Winter 1056 (technically early spring. Hah)

I was in my office, as usual, updating our ledgers and checking our supply lists when I was advised that the elven caravan was arriving from the east. To be honest I'm surprised they came to trade with us. Their diplomat left in a huff after a very short visit with the Baroness. I wonde

We are besieged! The elves flee for the safety of our walls before a goblin horde. I'll write later. The time for battle is upon us.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 25, 2008, 05:39:36 pm**

17th of Granite 1056

The siege is broken. Our defenses and defenders proved resolute yet again. Two goblin platoons came in from the east, an axemaster leading fifteen speargoblins and a spearmaster leading fifteen axegoblins. I wonder if they did that on purpose... They were the first seen and the elves confirmed their presence once we had them protected by stone gates. We became aware of the groups on the upper plateau somewhat later. Three more full platoons. A swordmaster with fifteen crossbow goblins, another axemaster with fifteen axegoblins and a bowmaster with fifteen pikegoblins. A substantial eighty goblins have come against us this time. Apparently they haven't learned. Unfortunately my trap didn't work out quite as I intended. Before they even made the corridors they ran into my traps on the east. One of the groups broke ranks and fled after their leader disappeared. I found out later that he and four others were caught in our cage traps. Looks like Ragnar will have his fun. A similar occurance happened on the west, much to my dismay and we couldn't lock the gates to keep all of them from running. Still, they proved better than nothing and when we left our secure fortress to charge the remaining groups it was almost a rout than a battle. The goblins quickly broke ranks and ran, some being caught by our outer gates where they were cornered and summarily killed by Ragnar and his crew. Almost everyone saw a little bit of action and to my amazement we had no casualties at all this siege. Had we not been so well equipped it may have turned out differently.

In all eighty goblins came to siege Dorenemal. Thirty three managed to flee, the others were killed except for the five that we caught. I thought we could do better, but in order to do so I'd have to remove most of my traps to lure them in closer before springing the doors. It would take some work, but I had help now, three able mechanics and siege engineers. I even had the ballistae loaded and ready to fire but unfortunately there was no cause to use them. Cleaning up will take some time.

Again the elves were here to partake of this scene of bloodshed. I wonder how they feel about this. I'm sure they'd defend their homes as well were they attacked, but considering we came here and invaded first... technically, they might harbor some ill will towards us. In any case they were still willing to trade with us. Despite their protestations, or perhaps because of it, that we abused our trees they brought a small supply of lumber for us. It was a welcome addition, though they carried little else of use. Some roots and berries, not much, and cloth of which we had plenty. Still, they left content with our stone crafts.

In any case, I'd better get above. There is much work to be done on all sides now. I suspect we may have a bit of a break when it pertains to goblin-kind so I'd better get my plans enacted.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 26, 2008, 05:17:34 pm**

12th of Slate

Melbil, our glassmaker, gave birth to a girl today. It seems that almost everywhere I turn now I see children chasing each other around the fort or playing in workshops and whatnot. It warms my heart to see our young.

We held a ceremony to honor our experienced guard today as well. Not to be outdone by the military several of our guard had requested the challenge of Champions and our Hammerdwarf was pleased to admit and pass four of our Fortress Guard and one Royal guard. Ragnar seems pleased that our military forces are doing so well. He himself has been training hard also. Nish Besmarkacoth, Nish Igathreil, Ducim and Rith of our Fortress guard are now Champions and Deduk of the Royal as well. It was a good day all around. We're still cleaning up after the siege but all goes well.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 29, 2008, 12:43:00 pm**

20th of Slate

I'm writing this here because even though just about everyone can come to either Litast or myself to complain I have no place to do so. The Baroness is so infuriating. I've now tried to comply to her demand by trying out different things in her tomb. I had a lay pewter chest made for it specially. But no, that wasn't what she was looking for. Neither was the obsidian table or chair. Nor the nice tower-cap bed,

though I admit that would be a little strange, even for her. The obsidian statue and obsidian cabinet didn't please her either. I'm running out of different furniture options to try. Her request is so open ended I fear that I'll never find something that fits just right.

I wonder now if this isn't some test of hers, just to see if I'll jump when she wants me to. I admit, it makes sense to try to please her to a certain degree. However if I don't find what she's looking for at this point I'd be tempted to just lock her in her tomb until she tells me specifically what she darn well wants in there. At that point I suspect it'd be food and drink. Perhaps I should ask the others what they think I could try. Fre might have some insight into how a dwarfess thinks. Or perhaps Urvad, though I've no doubt she'd likely say something like a steel casket, or steel armor stand.

Writing this gives me a few more ideas to try. We'll just have to see how it goes.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **July 29, 2008, 02:41:44 pm**

Aardvarks log

20th Slate
I must say I am getting proder by the moment thinking that the equipment I am making finds its hand into the champions of the clan. Now I just have to find a way to keep that Dungeonmaster out of my forge. Maybe I should ask Paulus if I could have a forge for myself, or make the forges out of bounds for anyone exept me and my team. That would be a plan... I'll have to speak with Paulus about that.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **July 29, 2008, 03:26:13 pm**

Fre's Journal

21st of Slate
Paulus came up to me today; wanted me to use my "womanly intuition" to figure out what that prissy little baroness wants in her tomb. How should I know what a lazy, stupid, stuck-up, no-good nobledwarf wants? I told him that I would want bones, lots of bones. Maybe some pies, too. If Paulus follows my suggestions (which I doubt he will), I hope I'm there to see that stupid baroness's face when she looks at her new tomb.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Dr. Melon** on **July 30, 2008, 04:11:05 am**

Journal of the Esteemed Melonius Greenback The Fifth
21st Slate

Hah! Do these low fools not recognise me? When I tell of my great heritage, they do not even attempt as to inquire to my lineage! They just oculate at me, probably jealously.

Ha! When I claim the throne they shall see indeed I am the righteous king!

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 30, 2008, 04:29:23 pm**

24th of Slate 1056

I was called up from below and stood at our doorway to the outside, the doors still slightly cracked and warmth billowing out in a rush, trying vainly to warm the frozen air. I was surprised by the call at first, but not overly so. Immigrants had been known to arrive at strange times and this was certainly one of them. I suppose had they come from the south it was warmer and might have been considered spring. Here... in this sub-freezing cliff-side where the wind cut through all but stone like a knife it was not anywhere close to spring. Out of the swirling snow down the road came figures, dwarves, popping from around the corner at almost regular intervals.

At their head singing loud songs and generally proclaiming the miracles of modern craftsmanship and the advance of knowledge came Astesh Mengoggez. I'd heard of him. He was one of the court Philosophers. A dwarf of education and learning, and someone who under normal circumstances would prove fascinating to read about, was trooping up our road with twenty other dwarves who were accompanying him. By his side as escort was a burly looking Hammerdwarf. This would be interesting. I'd had little experience dealing with others of learning and to be quite honest, couldn't stand having intellectual discussions with others, despite my own background. Reading about it was one thing, that was all well and good, but to have to schmuck who thought he was right tell you you're doing things all wrong when the way you've been doing it is clearly the best way logically is very frustrating. I could imagine it now...

"Why are you using a pulley there? Wouldn't it be more effective to have a counter-weighted lift?"

"Because it's a narrow shaft, there isn't room for a counterweight."

"Ah, but you could enlarge it."

"Then it wouldn't be a narrow shaft, it'd be a large shaft, which would interfere with what's on the other side of that wall."

"Ah, but everyone would love seeing it. Why you could easily rig up two tons of stone as a counterweight and quadruple you're carrying capacity."

"We don't have any rope capable of supporting a counterweight of that size."

"Then you should make one."

"Oh yeah? Out of what? Metal?"

"Hmm... yes... metal would work. That's a great idea. I'm glad I thought of it."

Hmpf... yeah. That's how those conversations would go. Metal ropes and magic lifts that go up and down smoothly. Flaming nonsense if you ask me. I still hadn't gotten the Baroness' tomb properly furnished to her satisfaction. I'm beginning to think that Fre's idea had merit. Locking the Baroness in a tomb full of bones might persuade her to be more reasonable in the future. Or at least tell me what in the stones she wants specifically next time. I'd be tempted to leave out the pie if she's less than compliant. Personally it sounded like either the Baroness or her consort had complained about the cooking. Probably her consort. He was always complaining about something. Seemed to think he was entitled to it. I only hope he didn't say anything to Fre directly. First it would almost certainly be untrue. I've never had such fine meals. Second, Fre could tear him limb from limb with her bare hands... and she had lots of small, sharp implements at her disposal at all times. I certainly wouldn't be placing my money on him.

Aardvark tells me Lord Rovod has been busy in the forges again. I know it bugs him, but there's little I can do about it. Well, at least Aardvark has his own forge, and we have a separate for for our legendary metalcrafter. I suppose letting Lord Rovod have his fun at the smelters and the weapon/metalsmithing forge is ok. I'll have to make sure he understands about the designations. Wouldn't be the first time. Perhaps I'll try to get him some wild animals he can play with.

In any case, I welcomed our new arrivals and escorted them below. Astesh could take one of the larger empty rooms after we had

furnished it. Perhaps I'd ask him to set up a school of sorts here. I've been teaching a half dozen newer dwarves the finer points of mechanics and siegecrafts, and Litast about paperwork, not that she hasn't had plenty of practice lately. The others we may have room for. Though we might be short a few beds. I'll have to take a look again. In any case I'll list our new additions here in my journal.

- 1 Cheesemaker (Royal guard)
- 1 Peasant
- 1 Soapmaker (Both Fortress guards)
- 1 Animal Caretaker (new Army archer)
- 1 Glassmaker (join the club and get to work. I need green glass blocks for a project)
- 1 Fisherdwarf (planter in winter)
- 1 Planter
- 1 Clothier (also dyer perhaps... we'll have to work on getting that started)
- 1 Miner
- 1 Hammerdwarf, hired escort for Astesh
- 1 Peasant (archer)
- 1 Jewler (Not needed, new Royal guard)
- 1 Miner
- 1 Peasant (Fortress guard)
- 1 Metalcrafter
- 1 Bowyer (woodcutter/carpenter/engraver)
- 1 Animal Trainer (archer)
- 1 Peasant (archer)
- 1 Clothier and 1 last Peasant (also military, I'll ask Ragnar where they're needed)

Twenty one new dwarves in all. As if I didn't have enough to do at the moment. At least our food supply is stable, if somewhat short of meat at the moment.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 31, 2008, 01:07:12 pm**

10th of Felsite

We've had two fatalities lately in the guard barracks. Lorbam, a new guard and Thob a new Royal guard bled to death following an injury sustained while sparring. It's unfortunate. Thob for some reason wasn't even wearing armor, which seemed strange as we had piles of it. It was then that I was informed by Fath that the new recruits hadn't been authorized to use armor yet. Still, they'd been wrestling with other guards. Neither party had been using weapons, so I find it strange and very frustrating.

I was furious, but mostly at myself. It was an oversight that had caused these accidents. They should have known better. Everyone else was wearing steel. They should thought to question why they were issued no armor at all. I should have known better. I made a note of it for the future, and saw that they were entombed properly. It was the least I could do.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 31, 2008, 03:08:10 pm**

20th of Felsite 1056

Our tax collector decided to step up and mandate some goods be made. Apparently he's fond of hatch covers and wants to see that we make more of them. We still have the original three he requested a year ago. Regardless, we made three more for him. As soon as we were finished he decided that we needed some Black Bronze items as well. I got our metalcrafter on it since we had bars in our supply. Things like that are less of a nuisance than what the Baroness had been trying. I've still yet to figure out what she wants. I've put everything imaginable in her tomb, including a hatch cover, flood gate and a green glass window I had made special. Nothing satisfied her. Fre's idea is sounding better and better, though at this point we don't have any furniture we haven't tried and I'll be thrown from the roof if I go about making furniture from random materials to try and satisfy an unnamed whim of hers.

Other than the Baroness things here go well. We're almost finished cleaning up after the last siege. The miners have almost finished excavating the iron veins up on the cliff. Work continues below as well and I've designated new areas to be opened up for housing once the miners finish what they're working on. In addition the Masons are keeping busy on our walls and floors. I've requested the walls to the east be expanded so I can enlarge our trap and once they're done with that side on the upper plateau as well. We're a little short of stone, but that's not a big problem. What is a big problem is that we're again out of wood, or almost so, and running low on fuel as well. None of the forests around us is even remotely close to ready to harvest either. I may have to shut down the furnaces, or at least bank some of them for a little while.

On the bright side I've gotten the final tally for the silver vein we found below. Eighty two bars worth. The tin vein is still going, after over a hundred bars already. Things from that perspective are looking good. Now if we just had fuel.

P.S. After I wrote this earlier I passed that strange new fellow in the halls... Melon-something. He was muttering to himself and sounded quite strange. Perhaps I'll have to ask Ragnar to put someone on him in a more permanent fashion. Either that or get our glassworks to stop making blocks and make raw glass so the shiftless blighter has more work to keep him busy.

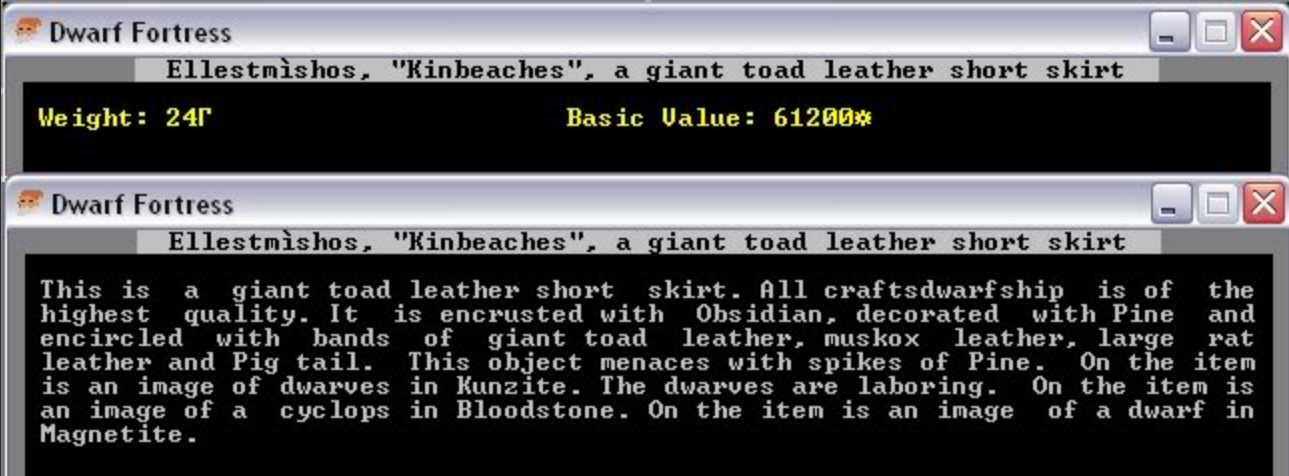
Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 31, 2008, 06:57:13 pm**

22nd of Felsite

Zuglar Kadolrag, one of our newer recruits nearly got brained in a sparring session today. Apparently in the middle of it he dropped his weapons, shield and armor and withdrew from society. Fath, who was overseeing the session nearly had him beaten then and there for desertion until he realized that Zuglar was thinking of a project he'd been drawing up for months. Apparently he took over a leatherworks and began madly gathering supplies. By the time I got there to see what was going on he'd gotten Giant Toad leather, MuskoX leather, Large rat leather, cut kunzites, rough bloodstones, obsidian blocks, pig tail cloth and a large chunk of unsmelted Magnetite. He sat there drawing a bunch of trees and muttering to himself until I whispered to him that he could use the wood I had set aside and forbidden for the woodburners. After that he was off.

While he was working Litast, our budding young Mayor decided to hold a massive party in the dining hall. I was a little busy to attend, and I suspect it was deliberately planned so she could encourage others to vote for her again in the upcoming annual mayoral election. She's almost been the only Mayor we had. Aside from Ragnar who preferred combat and Thob who was voted out after only a few months.

It didn't take Zuglar too long to finish his project. It looks astounding and appears quite valuable. Clearly one of the most diverse and impressive articles of clothing or armor I've yet to see. I'll have to congratulate him and offer him the leatherworking post if he wants it.



P.S. He said he preferred military life.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 31, 2008, 10:33:45 pm**

28th of Felsite

Well, it's official. Litast is our mayor once again. She must be doing a good job. Throwing parties probably helps too, and since she won she's taken it upon herself to throw another one down in the commons. I figured I'd join in this time since I need a bit of a break. I shouldn't have gone.

Sure, it was good to sit there and see Litast celebrating with her new beau, whatshisname, and all the others. I recognize a few of them, but find it very difficult to step out of my shell as it were. Instead I sat at a table sipping some excellent rum and watched the others have a good time. I'll admit it did bring a smile to my face now and again. But it also made me think. I've never been much of a socializer, never really felt like going out of my way to meet people or even help them for that matter. When I'd take those on our injured list food or water it was mostly out of a sense of duty I think rather than being personally invested in their well-being. Even now, with the population of the fortress being over a hundred I find that there are very very few dwarves I truly know well enough to consider friends. Sure, I'm the holder of the fort, the organizer, the manager, the bookkeeper most of the time. Everyone knows me. Or rather I should say, knows of me. Even in my meetings I've noticed that I'm never asked questions about myself. It's always about the fortress or others. Of all the dwarves I work with regularly only the original six I consider my true friends. Them and a few of the military dwarves, the pair that came with Lord Rovod, for example, and what few of the others I've sparred with when my other duties can spare me time. It's strange to feel so alone sometimes despite being surrounded by crowds. Even though I'm well-known, and I'd hope reasonably well-liked, I'm still practically invisible when I'm not 'on duty' as it were.

Of the original seven only six are left. Every once in a while I go visit Steele's tomb. I've sealed my friend off and tucked the key into a small cubby next to the door I've concealed in the wall. The six of us know how to get in, but few others. The engravings in the hall leading to Steele's tomb tell well enough who lies within. Mafol and Medtom, well, they've always been somewhat of peas in a pod. They head the mining crews jointly. I'd swear they think like each other and both can smell the type of stone they'll be getting to ten feet through solid rock. But they've got each other and I rarely see them at all. They're so busy that when they've got news to tell they generally send one of the fresher blood to tell me what's going on.

Fre is another matter entirely. Her food has become divine, even the rat weed seed cakes she still occasionally makes have gotten better. But her true feats are still her prickly-berry pies, the wild strawberry seedcakes and of course the diverse roasts and stews that she comes up with. I've never had such good food it makes me drool just writing this. But she too is hard to approach. And she has Aardvark, though I'm sure they see little enough of each other with all the work going on around here. Aardvark too has been busy heading up the metal works operation and though I see him often enough he's usually got an arm in the quench and directing the others with his free hand while he waits for his piece to cool properly. His work too has gotten quite masterful. I've seen some of the work he's been putting out. I've appraised a single piece of his steel platemail at well over 12000 ingots worth. That's a good value for the protection it provides too. The stuff is darn near indestructible and his emblem, the double A, or rather the A within an A is on every single piece of steel armor in this fortress. And there is an awful lot of that.

That really leaves just Ragnar and I. I fear we've become the two solitary pillars of leadership here. The inner and outer core of this place. It seems that both of us have become isolated to a certain degree by both our innate position and the regard with which others view us. Perhaps that's why I like the other founders so much. They knew me as just Paulus, the mechanic when this all started. I've grown beyond that, as have all the others in their own ways, but they know and remember what it was like those first few months. The unknown goblins lurking in other towers, the billowing snowstorms, the lack of food and adequate shelter, the endless toil in discomfort.

I look at the others at the party and see smiling faces, laughter and joy, enjoyment of drink and find that I simply can't stay. For some reason I simply don't belong to this world I've created.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 01, 2008, 03:13:14 pm**

11th of Hematite

As a quick preface, in comment to my last entry. I think I overindulged a bit at the party. That rum was more potent than I think I expected. I tend to get a little melancholy when I'm drunk... or so I've been told. In any case, the humans came back today. A nice large caravan again. Abba gleefully sitting in the head wagon, while a human dignitary of some sort and her guard walked next to them. As they approached it looked like Abba was pointing out features of our fortress the others might find interesting. Like the permanently red-stained ramp or the deep black-red obsidian of our entry-way, our steel double doors and iron gates.

I was waiting for Abba in the trade depot as she rode in, the other wagons following her. The dignitary was greeted by Baroness Lokum and her consort and escorted below. Abba accepted my offered hand as she climbed down.

"I see you're back for another year, eh, Abba?"

"Of course. After last year I couldn't well skip this place now could I?" She winked at me and smiled as her crew began unloading.

I ordered the designated goods brought up as well and Abba and I retired to the roof of the trade-post to enjoy the warmish breeze and sunshine while the others began getting ready to trade.

We talked for some time, about her trade routes, the weather, how our fortress had fared. Goblins were a frequent subject as well. Apparently the human settlements continued to see heavy raids. Another three had been found decimated by the war. Apparently the dwarven outposts hadn't been faring that well either. But it hadn't been completely one sided. The goblins, by all accounts had taken decent losses, but there seemed to be innumerable amounts of them. The humans desperately needed weapons and armor. Just like my own people. With the equipment from the last siege I felt we could both meet our quota to the king this year, and help out the humans. I ordered most of the goblin weapons brought up, and all of the goblin bows and arrows that dwarves simply did not, or could not use.

It's strange that I feel remarkably at ease with this human. Perhaps in large part it's because she simply has a head for numbers. We think, in many respects, along similar lines. In other ways, of course, our thinking is very different. I am a Fahlstrom. That alone carries a weight in my mind that few other things can rival. I'm not sure she can understand the concept of a dwarf clan being their family. Perhaps even other dwarves do not feel quite the same as I do about that, having lost my own family as a child. I do not remember my parents with sadness though. Death is simply a part of life. It's what you do while you are alive that can truly make a difference.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 01, 2008, 03:18:04 pm**

17th of Hematite 1056

We are besieged again. I write this in haste, since I intend to join in with the soldiers this time. About time I get a little military practice. At least four local goblin leaders from what I've been informed of by our scouts. And sixty goblins with them. Fully half of which are armed with crossbows. Not a good sign. I curse the fact that I've our traps to the east and haven't had time to replace them. We'll just have to make due and hope the cowardice of goblin-kind holds true.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 02, 2008, 11:30:27 am**

22nd of Hematite

The siege continues. The group that came from the east, fifteen pike and the elite crossbowgoblin were the first to attempt to take our gates. A smaller group of the pike broke off and charged early I think and were caught in our traps and decimated. The others seemed more hesitant after that. By the time the rest were approaching we'd sealed in the humans, and sealed in the other goblins as well. I'm not sure if all of the goblins were through the upper gate as I couldn't see it from the north building but we couldn't wait any longer before shutting our doors completely. The goblins are now trapped between our walls and iron gates. There appear to be a handful of pike and the crossbow leader immeadiately outside our doors. A group of crossbows, 12 in all stand near the ballistae, which we can't use since too many fortifications were installed and they'd be able to shoot at our dwarves were they to go near them. We're also out of ammo for them anyways. They worked well. The first shot missed and slammed into the wall, shattering the shaft. The second ballista arrow sailed well and caught a goblin through the torso as it tore through the ranks that were approaching at the time. The goblin stared in shock at the gaping hole through it's body before collapsing in a pool of blood. A second group of crossbowgoblins hold fast at the intersection. And the rest of the pike mill around on the ramps. Some must have been caught by the traps there but I know not how many.

We lost Adil, our animal caretaker as he was returning on top of the walls. One of their archers got him and we are unable to retrieve his body as of yet. Doren, one of our miners, is also missing, and since he was working on the ramp I fear that he too has fallen.

Their numbers are too great for them to flee would we open the gates to let them out. I fear the only thing we can do is either wait them out, not a likely choice, admittedly, or charge them somehow and hope for luck. With that many bows it won't be pretty.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 02, 2008, 09:21:25 pm**

((Here's a little teaser for the weekend.))



((You can see the elite crossbowman under fire mid screen, and the goblin swordmaster and his (at least 13) crossbowgoblins on the right))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 04, 2008, 12:17:17 pm**

25 of Hematite Siege of 1056

It took a little planning but we knew we'd have to charge out of our gates at some point. We waited a little while for the goblins to settle down in what they no doubt assumed to be an effective siege. I had picked a time to begin the operation that wasn't perhaps the most convenient. Half the fortress was asleep, including Ragnar and a good portion of our military. But they'd been on active duty for some time and they certainly needed the rest. When I called for the archers and had them position themselves directly behind the main gate protecting the merchants things began to take shape. Tosid and Fath were at the steel doors, Urvad as a backup defender. I didn't want her in the charge directly. She was still carrying her child into battle and I simply didn't want to risk both of them. Only three of our military archers were on duty but apparently others had heard the call. Thorid, one of our rangers showed up, dressed in his gear. To my surprise the shifty gemsetter, Melonius I think his name was, showed up wearing gear and with a crossbow. I didn't realize that he had any skill at arms, but let him stand with the others. I climbed to the top of the northern building to where everyone could see me, but where I could remain relatively hidden from the goblins almost directly beneath me. Pointing to the archers I signalled for the gate to be dropped.

All five of our archers were in position when the gates opened. The goblins must have been taken by surprise, since almost every archer got off at least three shots before the goblins even reacted. By then the single pikegoblin with the crossbow leader had gone down and the leader himself was pinned by fire. He managed to get off two shots I think before he took a bolt in the arm, spinning him to the ground. A second bolt took him through the leg shortly thereafter, then a third. Our crossbowers were backed up by several of the human archers that were firing as well. It wasn't long before the first platoon of goblins had been completely eliminated. As our archers slowly advanced, Fath and Tosid opened the gates and charged into the midst of the crossbow goblins milling almost directly outside them.

It was a spectacle the likes of which I would not expect to see again. Both Fath and Tosid charged like mad, and before the goblins knew what was upon them had closed almost the entire distance. Tosid went for the nearest crossbow goblin, while Fath was confronted by the platoon leader, a swordmaster. Sword rang on sword as the air seemed to be filled with the buzzing of bolts, but Fath proved the more skilled by far. A quick series of blows broke through the goblins defenses and it found itself flying backwards to strike the wall, dead in the air without realizing it.

The clack-clack of crossbow bolts intensified as Fath and Tosid literally danced among the goblins, wreaking death and destruction on all hands. Tosid faltered momentarily when he took a bolt through the hand, but seemed to shrug it off, snapping it on his armor and removing the rest with his teeth as he blocked shots with his shield. Most of the fire seemed intensified on Fath, who had slain their leader, and quite a few bolts were by now being deflected by his armor. Goblin after goblin went down, felled by the deadly pair and soon

the goblin platoon began to falter. A reprieve nearly saved them when Fath took a bolt at point blank range directly in the chest. From my vantage I could only see the barest end of it still protruding from his armor and he seemed to pause, stunned at the shot. The timely arrival of reinforcements, in the form of our archers who had advanced far enough to be within range, and of Urvad who, sensing the initial danger past, charged out with Kuli, wielding a spear right behind. The second platoon of goblins didn't hold out much longer than that, but it seemed that the other two platoons, nearer the ramp had been alerted to the activity and were beginning to move towards the gates. Tosid ran back inside to report and get a quick drink while Fath, Urvad and Kuli pressed on to take the intersection of roads.



Our archers began coming up from behind as well, and not a few of them paused at the scene of carnage before them, stunned and nauseous. ((Actually that happened to almost everyone as soon as they would run around the corner to go through the battle site at first))

Urvad led the charge on the third goblin platoon, the other crossbow goblin group. The hammermaster leader confronted the three warriors but stood little chance as Urvad cut him down with a single strike, sending him flying into a crossbow goblin behind him and knocking it down. The goblins seemed almost too stunned by the ferocity of the attack to put up much resistance as the three cut their way through them. The platoon of pikegoblins were now filtering down the ramp as well and joining in the fray. Urvad took a wicked hit from behind in her upper arm, a pike penetrating her armor, but undaunted she turned on it and severed the goblin's arm, then leg, then torso. Kuli was flying about perpetrating equal carnage with his spear, driving it into goblins and bearing them to the ground with it. He had a brief moment of peril when he was caught flatfooted one on one with a crossbowgoblin. The goblin unloaded as Kuli dived to one side and coming up in a roll charged the goblin. A second bolt was deflected off his shield as he speared in, taking the goblin through the arm and pinning the appendage to it's torso. Kuli twisted the weapon in the wound and the goblin passed out, dragging the dwarf closer to it. A quick retrieval of his weapon and thrust later and he was off running to rejoin the others in their fray.

The third goblin platoon was dispatched, along with the leader and a few pike of the fourth platoon. Fath and Kuli undertook the cleaning of the ramp while Urvad retreated to see to her wounds. There were only eight pikegoblins remaining. Fath charged ahead, with Kuli behind him. Charging into a group of three Fath dealt with the first almost as soon as he arrived, sending it unconscious to the ground, missing a leg. Two goblins attempted to flank Fath but were met by Kuli. The first was speared in the leg but the second managed to tackle him and they wrestled briefly before Kuli got the upper hand and stood, grabbing his spear and driving it into the belly of the prone goblin. Fath was slowing down and was doubled over, desperately trying to catch his breath and deflect goblin shots as Kuli finished off his goblin and caught up with the other that had started to flee up the ramp. A few repeated thrusts saw the goblin bleeding from arm, leg and throat, effectively silencing it. Fath by that time had caught his breath and together the pair finished off the remaining few.

And so ended the siege of summer 1056.

We had lost two civilians. Fath's injury was the only serious one. He'd taken a bolt through the lung and though it hadn't incapacitated him, it would certainly slow him down. I wasn't sure if he would ever recover fully from the injury. The skill with which our defenders performed was spectacular however, and that evening a celebration was held in their honor.

Sixty four goblins had come. Only three, who hadn't been caught inside the gates managed to escape. And I've discovered many things about our defenses that I would need to change, in order to ensure better safety in the future. For one, installing doors on the old mined out sections on the ramp might allow dwarves caught out to flee there and lock the doors behind them, ensuring relative safety until the siege was broken. As long as sieges didn't take too long they could survive well enough without food or water.



((That's you Kuli about to finish off a crossbowgoblin. Poor guy. Heh.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 04, 2008, 03:58:55 pm**

(No date given)

Apparently the siege came at an unexpected price. When we opened our doors to allow our archers to fire an errant bolt, undoubtedly fired by a goblin, struck one of the merchant animals, killing it. Though Abba was as frustrated as I was by the situation, their guild rules clearly forbade them from engaging in any further negotiations this time. Abba explained that the rule was to prevent abuses of the merchants by unscrupulous settlements, as it was not uncommon for merchandise to be siezed, or occasionally whole caravans to be slaughtered for their goods. We needed the wood they brought, and they needed the weapons we had. But despite the swearing and attempts to cajole, the humans had to leave as soon as the siege had lifted.

The human diplomat, the princess Etus Ushpu, came to speak with me briefly after the wagons had already started out. Though she

expressed regret at the incident she assured me that they'd be back next year and would greatly appreciate the 'supplies' Abba had been promised then. Such was the price of law.

I suppose cases of friendly fire like this were uncommon enough. It did put us in a bit of a sticky situation. But it could have been worse. We could now deliver all the weapons to the dwarven caravan this year and make more for the humans next.

Cleaning up after the siege, however, did not promise to be a nice task, as the carnage outside our front gates caused even the toughest of humans to blanch and in many cases, lose their lunch.

P.S. It is with regret that I write this now. Kib, another of our guard died during combat practice. With the siege over our military has taken to training with new zeal. I may ask Ragnar to have them tone it down a bit.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 05, 2008, 11:47:07 am**

((My apologies for any delay. I'd played through a few months and taken notes for writing. Then during a second siege this year one of the goblins got slammed against the wall. He survived, but got suspended somehow and so when all the others fled he was stuck. Nobody would kill him, I removed the wall and ground underneath him but he stayed suspended and the siege didn't lift. I'm assuming it was some kind of glitch. Which is a pity since Ragnar had some fun smacking goblins off of cliffs. So, I'll revert out of necessity to a previous save which should take over where we left off. I've also been experimenting with the newest version and have updated to it.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 05, 2008, 05:14:46 pm**

10th of Limestone

Nish, one of our guards gave birth to a girl. Again. I congratulated her but had to hurry back to my office to check my paperwork. Turns out I was right. She has four children now. I thought I remembered something about previous ones. In any case, it's a time for rejoicing.

((We're now back to our regularly scheduled updates))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Kuli** on **August 05, 2008, 07:48:41 pm**

Awesome. I was just going to ask if Kuli had seen any action yet, but it looks like that update answered that question for me.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 06, 2008, 03:51:22 pm**

((Don't worry Kuli. You saw tons of action last siege. I think between you and Fath you two probably got about 30 kills combined. Unfortunately it was still the previous version and I've got no record of them now that I've updated. Also... you sustained a minor neck injury in the combat. Maybe I'll nickname you 'Twitch'. ;)))

14th of Limestone

We'd just barely finished cleaning up after the previous siege. I had ordered the upper south plateau recut to boost our fuel supply since I knew it would be needed and we couldn't get any trade goods from Abba and her crew. To my dismay the call of alarm rang out shortly before the woodcutters had finished up top. The goblins had come again. And it looked like they had gotten smarter. No longer were there large platoons of just melee or ranged. They now came with mixed groups, and usually half the group was ranged. A dangerous combination. I ordered everyone inside and requested the military form up at the intersection. Our eastern defenses still hadn't been put fully into place again.

Dwarves from the upper plateau streamed past, some carrying logs, others merely running for their lives. The last one down, our clothier, passed by huffing.

"Udil was behind me. But I myself barely made it through the gates before the goblins. They must have seen him and taken off after him first."

I growled out a brief curse. I'd taken time to suit up in steel and still by the time I'd shown up only Tosid had come. The goblins had caught us unawares, with a good portion of the military either sleeping or down in the commons drinking, and in no condition for combat. I cursed again.

"Let's pull back to the gates then. Let our traps do their thing and try to stall."

Tosid and I marched back towards our steel doors, gathering up Iton and Thorid, two of our marksdwarves on the way. A group of goblins was already coming around the corner behind us from the east. Lashers, and crossbow, with a hammergoblin leader near the middle of the group. The clack of a crossbow sounded behind me as I rounded the corner and I saw it shatter on the wall to my side. To make things worse, it was then that I noticed that someone had left a block of cut obsidian in our doorway, blocking the door open and preventing it's use. Try as I might I could not find an inner calm as I ordered the remaining doors shut and locked. We'd have to make a stand here, one way or another. Thorid and Iton were positioned behind us, watching for a goblin to stick it's green head around the corner. Tosid and I were waiting near the wall at the corner for the same thing.

A goblin wrestler stepped around the corner first, expecting to see fleeing dwarves, but instead found us, waiting for him. To it's credit it charged us, not bothering to look where it was going as it exploded in a cloud of gore and parts, ripped apart by a weapon trap. A crossbow goblin rounded the corner as well, and seeing us managed to get off a quick shot before stepping forward onto the same trap that had claimed it's kinsman. The quarrel went wide shattering against the wall next to me as the goblin that loosed it was impaled from below on obsidian swords. The weapons tried to retract again but were caught in the body and drug it to the ground. Two down, lots to go. I didn't bother trying to trap them in. With only a single line of active traps, and most of our military still not ready the last thing I wanted to do was funnel them though our blocked open door. If I found out who left that block there they'd wish they were a goblin. I'd have them hammered so hard their bones would be bleeding ten years later.

Looking at the others I motioned them inside the gates.

"Let's try to lure this first group as far in as we can. Hopefully we'll let the traps get a few more of them. Archers, take up a position above us and cover the ramp. Stall them as long as possible."

Tosid and I took up positions on either side of the door waiting. Again, unexpectedly, Melonius came up, suited in leather and armed with a crossbow. I positioned him against the wall of the refuse dump, giving him a clear shot through the open doorway.

Muttering about the lack of available soldiers we made our stand. The siege had just begun!

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 06, 2008, 05:33:13 pm**

I was interrupted in my recording of the events of the siege by yet another blasted meeting. Even during the siege I was plagued by these. Our Dyer, I forget his name, insisted on continuing the meeting I had interrupted in order to help defend our home. It wasn't until he tapped me on the shoulder while we were waiting for the second wave that I turned on him. Blood covered my sword, and much of my armor. I gave him a glare and very quietly said: "I'd take pleasure in guttin' you ... boy.". I don't think he appreciated the sentiment, in fact, I'm sure he didn't. Of course, when someone is covered in blood says that to you the best thing to do is agree with them.

Or run away. Fast.

He didn't bother me until after the siege was over.

From behind the door I could hear the rest of the first group approaching. Harsh laughs and calls to us to come out and play, when they could be understood at all. As soon as they found our rows of traps the cries became more frantic, and primal. And that was when Tosid and I charged out. Apparently a good portion of the crossbow goblins from the first group had either been caught by traps or decimated by them, but at least three remained. I could hear the clack of crossbows through the fortifications which meant that Iton and Thorid were busy trying to stall. There were more goblins coming then. With surprise the goblins looked up to face us as we charged out. Some were busy ensuring they weren't stepping on traps, others milling about in minor confusion. The archers had sense enough to know a target when they saw one, however, and unloaded on the two of us as we sprinted out. A bolt went wide, another was deflected by Tosid's shield. Unfortunately the third caught me in my left hip, penetrating the armor but not deeply. It hurt, but not badly. Swiping my sword down I sheared off the shaft and continued the charge, bringing my sword up in an uppercut at the goblin that had shot me. My sword collided with it, penetrating leather armor and punching through lungs, heart and spine and sticking out the back side. The force of the blow knocked the goblin off my sword again as it went flying to strike the wall behind us. Tosid was making quick work of a second and a quarrel from behind me took the third archer in the arm, spinning him around. Melonius had followed us out to provide support. The half a dozen goblins that were outside our gate we dispatched quickly. Other than the crossbows, none had weapons, but rather tried to wrestle us to the ground. Neither Tosid nor I were having any of that and plenty of severed limbs and fingers attested to that.

The first platoon down we took a slight breather protected by the corner. It had gone eerily silent. Even the crossbows on the other side of the fortification were quiet. I took a moment to look through and all I could see was the tip of Iton's boot lying in a pool of blood, a few shafts from bolts were visible. Thorid was nowhere to be seen, and I hoped that he had retreated.

During this eerie silence a strange thing happened. It was as though the world became muted. The oncoming shouts of goblins seemed dulled and even the pounding of my heart seemed muted to an eerie earthy cadence I could almost hear, but rather felt through the souls of my feet. My heart calmed as I listened to the rhythm of the earth, the pulse of the stones. Tosid and I looked at each other as we sensed the oncoming horde and nodded to each other, a grim acceptance of death to be meted out or received as fate decreed.

We charged, Melonius behind us taking a position to fire from the corner. Silence descended upon me, the only sounds being those of the melody of the earth, the grinding, pulsing, throbbing of the stones beneath me. Until I heard the first sounds of the crossbows being fired. It was then that I realized my part in all of this. I was the counter-point to the earth, the variations of the theme, and the sounds of metal on metal, the echoes and screams of the dying, the snap of bone, metal and spraying blood merely a part of the whole that I was hearing. My trance-like state was complete as the macemaster and I danced a circle around each other, weaving and striking and blocking as needed. My time would come, I could sense it, two measures ahead, then one. As he struck I did too, severing three fingers from his weapon hand, before rolling to one side to dodge the incoming bolts I felt rather than saw. His weapon clattered to the ground and he pulled his stump to himself, but not before my sword darted in again, hissing against the edge of his shield as I took out his other arm at the elbow. A third blow seconds later took out his throat, a fourth ended his notes, a pool of them forming around his still form. Tosid too struck like thunder, like a mighty rending of the earth, scattering the goblins before him. He had won through to the archers and was among their ranks, decimating them with his axe. And though there were but three of us against thirty we fought on. Tosid took a hit to the leg, deflecting the worst of it with his shield, his own blood mixing with that of the enemy on his own armor. I confronted a goblin guard, exchanging strikes, until I saw an opening and took a hit to the side in order to open the goblins defenses. Two quick strikes saw the goblin on the ground, unconscious and bleeding rapidly from large gashes in his torso.

And then after the mighty crescendo of battle the sounds died out, the screams of the enemy ringing clearly in my ears as the goblins beat out a retreat despite their overwhelming numbers. Had they pressed the attack they might have carried the day, but with most of their leaders slain they fled the field of battle and the day was ours. Tosid lifted his helmet and looked at me grimly, clapping me on the shoulder.

"Well fought for a civilian."

I laughed. The two of us walked back into the fortress as the clean-up crews came out. I'd have to thank Melonius for covering us later.

After we had counted the dead and began gathering their things I double checked the numbers. Nearly ten killed in traps. Two had been captured in cages. Tosid had scored thirteen kills. I'd gotten eleven. Melonius had gotten but one direct kill, though three others had been mortally wounded and bled out. We'd lost Iton, one of our marksdwarves and Udil a woodcutter. At least a score of goblins had escaped. But we'd have new defenses in place by next time. I hoped.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 07, 2008, 12:18:53 pm**

27th of Sandstone

We're still cleaning up from the siege but we're nearly done. Apparently the Baroness gave birth to a boy today. She hasn't left her room for a bit, but I'll have to drop by and give her my best wishes.

Also after the siege we held a celebration party below in our commons. There was of course lots of drinking, much of which in honor of Iton and Udil our recently departed. Apparently however Tosid and I, due to our efforts during the last siege, have earned ourselves a title. Tosid's keenness for fatback roasts must have been well known as she's now called Tosid Ushrirbidok Uthirer, or Tosid Quakeacted the Searing Fats. I am now no longer just Paulus Monumozkak but rather Paulus Monumozkak Katakzustash Thir, Paulus Papercarried the Scaly Ancient of Harmonies. Apparently Tosid claimed I was singing during combat. I have no idea what she was talking about. I should certainly think I'd remember singing.

In any case, we still look to the east for the arrival of the merchants, though I grow concerned. They're later than normal this year.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 07, 2008, 01:12:08 pm**

1st of Moonstone 1056 First day of Winter officially

I'm sure now that the merchants shall not be coming this year. We've been isolated by sieges for too much time I'm afraid. Only the elves made it through early in the spring. Our stock piles grow cluttered, but there is little we can do about it. For now. Perhaps next year we'll be very generous with out goods.

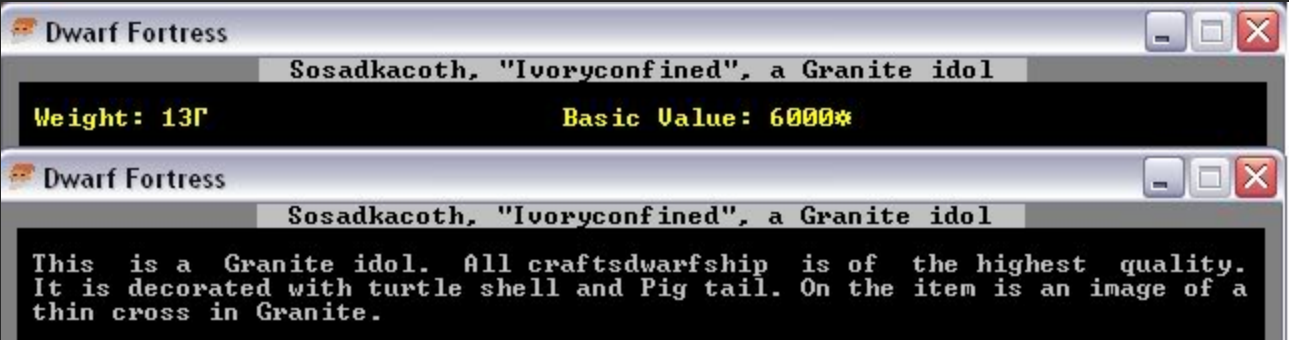
Since I'm pretty sure the caravans are not coming I've begun construction on the other gate to the east. I'd been holding off on it so the wagons could get by, but there seems to be little point in waiting any longer. Our miners have been busy as well, carving out new rooms and expanding our exploratory shafts. My pet project has been sufficiently stalled by necessary defenses that I wonder if it's worth it to finish it. I've had a shaft marked out to work on something similar enough that will be quick and easy though. A nice relaxation area for us. If I can only manage to have it run year around. Heh. We'll see.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 07, 2008, 01:16:58 pm**

27th of Moonstone

Our stonecrafter Astesh has decided it's time to work on his 'pet' project. He's not telling anywhat what he's doing but he holed himself up with a chunk of granite, turtleshell and pigtail cloth in a craftsdwarf workshop. I'm curious to see what turns out.

P.S.
A nice piece of craftsdwarfship but nothing particularly spectacular



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 07, 2008, 06:07:02 pm**

22nd of Opal

It's turning out to be a quiet winter. We've had four more individuals be accepted as dwarven champions. Three from our military. Eral, in axe; Mafol in spear and Sazir in hammer. Rigoth from the Royal guard was also able to pass the difficult challenges.

Work on the upper plateau continues apace. We'll be ready to install the floodgates just before the month of obsidian. Unfortunately we're essentially completely out of wood. There are a few scattered trees that might be ready to be hewn but most are still young and growing. I've ensured that no travel go through those areas so that the trees grow back as quickly as possible but it's distressing. Aardvark assures me that we've got enough armor to go around, and he's running low on steel anyways. We've got some coal, but not enough to make steel production worthwhile. In the mean-time I've asked the wood-burners to take up masonry. We've got a lot of wall to build, especially on the upper plateau.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **August 07, 2008, 06:17:19 pm**

I am just wondering if we can get a full map of the clan hold.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 07, 2008, 06:33:27 pm**

((Sure. I've actually been thinking about this a bit lately and I was thinking about opening it up to be somewhat of a succession world. Each person that has a character already and that lives to the end can choose to start their own Walls of Zeal fortress and tell their own story. I am therefore of course planning on posting the world for exploration and further fortressing. I've seen those 3D map plotting programs for DF but honestly have never used one, so if someone wants to let me know where I can find out how to post the full map let me know. I believe Ragnar expressed interest in doing a Fahlstrom fort after this, but I haven't heard or seen a post of his in a while.))

4th of Obsidian

Melbil, one of our unemployed glassmakers gave birth to a boy. I suppose it's my fault for not keeping them busier.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 07, 2008, 11:15:30 pm**

Obsidian 1056

Well, I've been feeling in a somewhat celebratory mood for some reason and in order to boost spirits I've ordered the construction of some coinage. Granted, much of it I plan on giving to the War fund whenever it happens to be collected. But there is just something pleasing about having coin in your pocket. I've spoken with the tax-collector about it and he whole heartily agrees. We've been mucking around with keeping track of accounts for too long. Not that that has it's benefits. But we've had a lot of people with little to do, what with our entire metalworking/glassworks being out of fuel. I've resorted to giving some military training, others are helping with our masonry projects and making blocks. All of our woodcutters have other jobs now too. There are hardly any trees to cut down.

In any case the copper coins display a turtle-shell mini forge on the front, and our national symbol the four pointed star on the back. Nothing particularly special. I find the silver coins very amusing though. The front side has, presumably, the king surrounded by other dwarves on the front. The back has a finely engraved image of a cat. That's right. A cat. The gold coins use the national symbols, the king on the back the four pointed star on the front.

In addition I've had the miners clear out a section below the living quarters a few levels for a large market area and have designated eight shops to be built. What's the point of having money if there is nothing to buy with it? I'm hoping this will encourage some enterprising dwarves to rise from the ranks so I can see where the talent lies. Anyone that's good at turning a profit I might have to consider making a broker should I want a break from my duties.

To commemorate the occasion I even had a select amount of platinum coins minted. Just five hundred coin. I'm hoping that they will be used for their intrinsic value, slightly above that of gold, as well as becoming more valuable over time as people begin collecting them. A single lot of five hundred should be sufficient for that purpose.

Work on the upper plateau goes very well, and the quiet winter has certainly been a help for that.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 07, 2008, 11:27:08 pm**

1st of Granite 1057 Spring

We've been here a mere six years and already our home is vast and well defended. An elven diplomat arrived today and was in a meeting with the Baroness for several hours. He seemed cheerful at first, but when the Baroness called me in there to discuss a matter privately he looked less than happy as he left briefly. The Baroness merely wanted to know if we could limit the number of trees we cut to a hundred or if she should ask for more.

I laughed and responded:"Baroness, there aren't even a hundred trees left on these slopes for us to cut. If that is all the elves ask of us then it should be an easy matter to deal with it. Request that they bring their 'properly culled' logs to trade though."

I could do a quick census of the flora but I was sure there weren't more than two dozen trees scattered widely across our cliffsides.

The diplomat left hurriedly after the meeting. I heard he even had the nerve to call the Baroness a 'butcher', though to them perhaps we

may all be such. I cannot fathom how an entire race would want to subsist on nuts, berries, roots and drink, fine as it may be.

The merchants came shortly after the diplomat left, but unfortunately all they brought were several bins of cloth. More than welcome since we were running a bit low. They received a few bins worth of stone rings, earrings, bracelets, crowns and other assorted crafts. We had more, but I'll be burned alive before I'm generous to those who just bring cloth to a fortress of this size.

((Here are the character updates.))

Idlers: 14

'Fre' Nitigsolon Zuneknïng B

"'Fre' Bittenflag the Sour B

♀

On Break

Very Strong

Unbelievably Agile

Very Tough

Master Cook

Skilled Grover

Proficient Marksdwarf

Armor User

Proficient Herbalist

Dabbling Pacifier

Dabbling Negotiator

Dabbling Comedian

Dabbling Conversationalist

Dabbling Persuader

g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd

Space: Done

'Fre' Nitigsolon Zuneknïng Bumal, "'Fre' Bittenflag the Sour Burns of Worr

'Fre' Nitigsolon Zuneknïng Bumal has been ecstatic lately. She had a truly decadent drink lately. She has been annoyed by flies. She admired own fine Cabinet lately. She dined in a legendary dining room recently. She had a fine drink lately. She slept in a very good bedroom recently. She admired a fine Table lately. She has been satisfied at work lately. She was caught in a snow storm recently. She admired a splendid tastefully arranged Statue lately.

She is romantically involved with 'Aardvark' Tallpaint. She is a dubious worshipper of Rintar the Gate of Blankets.

She is an enemy of The Spider of Unions. She is an enemy of The Veiled Wraith. She is a citizen of The Big Knives. She is a member of The Walls of Zeal.

'Fre' Nitigsolon Zuneknïng Bumal likes Periclase, Zinc, Aquamarine, horn, saltwater crocodile bone, Pig tail Fabric, the color cardinal, crosses, windows and flutes. When possible, she prefers to consume Wild strawberries and Dwarven rum.

She feels strong urges and seeks short-term rewards. She doesn't handle stress well. She is not a risk-taker. She is a pessimist. She is open-minded to new ideas. She admires tradition. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She finds rules confining. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at

'Ragnar' Shakethkivish Rîtho

"'Ragnar' Torridlancers the

Soldier

Extremely Strong

Perfectly Agile

Unbelievably Tough

Legendary Wood Cutter

Talented Carpenter

Proficient Axedwarf

Skilled Shield User

Competent Armor User

Dabbling Wrestler

Novice Intimidator

Novice Comedian

Novice Negotiator

Novice Consoler

Novice Conversationalist

Novice Pacifier

Novice Persuader

Novice Judge of Intent

Dabbling Swimmer

Dabbling Mason

Dabbling Grover

Legendary Pump Operator

Dwarf Fortress

'Ragnar' Shakethkivish Rîtholarek Rur, "'Ragnar' Torridlancers the Noble C

'Ragnar' Shakethkivish Rîtholarek Rur has been ecstatic lately. he made a friend recently. he talked with a friend lately. he admired a fine Seat lately. he slept without a proper room recently. he admired own fine Cabinet lately.

he is a worshipper of Litast Bristleinks.

he is an enemy of The Spider of Unions. he is an enemy of The Veiled Wraith. he is a citizen of The Big Knives. he is a member of The Walls of Zeal. he is the captain of the guard of The Walls of Zeal.

'Ragnar' Shakethkivish Rîtholarek Rur likes Graphite, Nickel silver, Lapis lazuli, green glass, angelshark leather, the color lime, crescents, bolts, high boots, large gems, donkeys for their stubbornness and fairies for their babylike giggles. When possible, he prefers to consume Sewer brew.

he absolutely detests large roaches.

he has a calm demeanor. he doesn't handle stress well. he is very friendly. he tends not to openly express emotions. he is uncomfortable with change. he dislikes intellectual discussions. he is candid and sincere in dealings with others. he needs alcohol to get through the working day. he likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather. he doesn't really care about anything anymore.

'Aardvark' Shukarlogem, Pump

"'Aardvark' Tallpaint"

♂

No Job

Extremely Strong

Agile

Superdwarvenly Tough

Competent Weaponsmith

Accomplished Armorsmith

Competent Axedwarf

Armor User

Novice Building Designer

Novice Conversationalist

Novice Negotiator

Novice Comedian

Novice Judge of Intent

Novice Consoler

Novice Pacifier

Dabbling Wrestler

Dabbling Shield User

Wood Burner

Novice Furnace Operator

Dabbling Swimmer

Dabbling Mason

Novice Metalsmith

Dabbling Grover

High Master Pump Operator

Dwarf Fortress

'Aardvark' Shukarlogem, "'Aardvark' Tallpaint", Pump Operator

'Aardvark' Shukarlogem has been ecstatic lately. He dined in a legendary dining room recently. He admired a fine Shop lately. He talked with a friend lately. He slept in a very good bedroom recently. He has been satisfied at work lately. He admired own fine Container lately. He was caught in a snow storm recently.

He is romantically involved with 'Fre' Bittenflag the Sour Burns of Worry. He is a worshipper of Asën Sabledye the Crystalline Ink.

He is an enemy of The Spider of Unions. He is an enemy of The Veiled Wraith. He is an enemy of The Terrors of Firing. He is an enemy of The Outward Jackal. He is an enemy of The Fell Fellowship. He is a citizen of The Big Knives. He is a member of The Walls of Zeal.

'Aardvark' Shukarlogem likes Black sand, Silver, Rhodolite, Mangrove, longfin mako shark bone, turtle shell, waves, short swords, windows, goblets and minotaurs for their horns. When possible, he prefers to consume giant rat and Tuber beer. He absolutely detests rats.

He is very friendly. He is unassertive. He does not have a great aesthetic sensitivity. He dislikes intellectual discussions. He is slow to trust others. He is candid and sincere in dealings with others. He is immodest. He is not easily moved to pity. He thinks it is incredibly important to strive for excellence. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement

'Melonius' Isanoddom, Marks

"'Melonius' Stillcloisters"

♂

Soldier

Agile

Gem Setter

Dabbling Negotiator

Dabbling Conversationalist

Dabbling Flatterer

Dabbling Pacifier

Dabbling Intimidator

Dabbling Persuader

Dabbling Comedian

Dabbling Judge of Intent

Dabbling Consoler

Competent Marksdwarf

Dabbling Armor User

Dabbling Wrestler

'Melonius' Isanoddom, "'Melonius' Stillcloisters", Marksdwarf

'Melonius' Isanoddom has been happy lately. He admired a fine Table lately. He has been accosted by terrible vermin. He slept without a proper room recently. He admired own fine Cabinet lately.

He is a dubious worshipper of Rintar the Gate of Blankets.

He is a citizen of The Big Knives. He is a member of The Walls of Zeal.

'Melonius' Isanoddom likes Kimberlite, Lead, Red pyrope, Mangrove, clear glass, the color slate gray, stars, short swords, statues, spiked balls, cats for their aloofness and Rat weed for their hanging leaves. When possible, he prefers to consume Prickle berry wine, dwarven milk and Quarry bush Leaves. He absolutely detests rats.

He loves a good thrill. He is often cheerful. He dislikes intellectual discussions. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **MercDraco** on **August 08, 2008, 06:09:21 am**

um if its not too much trouble could i be dwarfed as a Hammerdwarf/weapon/armorsmith gender isn't a big thing but prefer male (pet kitten a plus)

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 08, 2008, 12:52:28 pm**

21st of Slate

We recieved a messenger from the mountainhome today. They merely confirmed that the merchants were unable to use the passes due to goblin activity. The Baroness recieved a sealed envelope as well. That evening she announced to everyone gathered in the great-hall that we had officially been declared a county. Ragged cheers went up. Everyone knew what this meant for the Baroness of course. Their own lives were less affected directly, but it meant a reasonably big boost in status for Dorenemal itself.

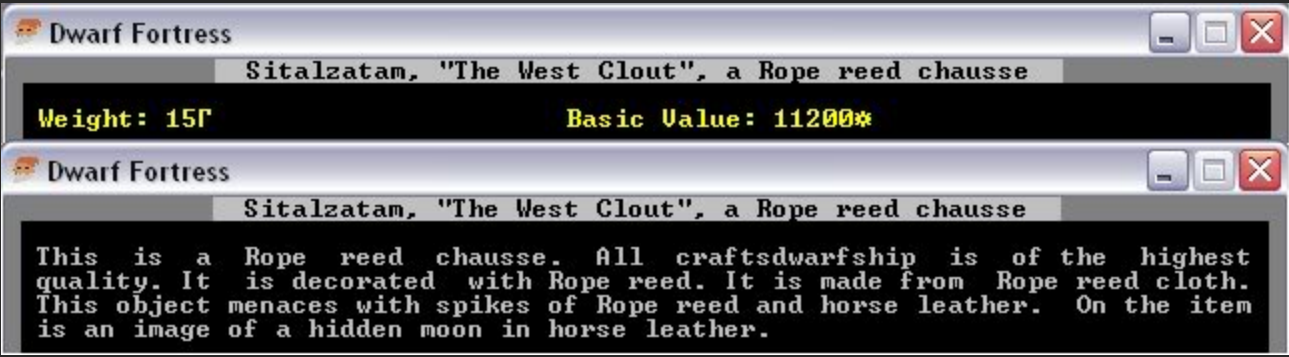
Urvad gave birth in the night to a baby girl. Her husband came to inform me shortly afterward. Maybe I should give them a bigger room.

((Sure thing MercDraco. I'll need your character name. I've got someone in mind, though no can do on the armorer. Aardvark is my only metal armorer. He's made every single piece of metal armor we have. We also don't have any kittens or dogs actually. Just a few horses and mules. Nobody has migrated with the other animals and when merchants bring them they're DOA (dead on arrival). The rest I'm pretty sure I can accomodate.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 08, 2008, 04:35:57 pm**

9th of Felsite

Our clothier began spouting gibberish today after looking at our new relaxation area. Something about the obsidian statues must have given him pause. It wasn't until an uncannily high-pitched voice echoed from her that I began to suspect something different. She kept muttering a name over and over and speaking in some foreign tounge. One that I was not familiar with. And I speak most of the common ones. After claiming the clothier shop she went to get two bolts of rope reed cloth and two sections of horse leather and began working, giggling and singing to herself all the while. I'll have to see what comes of this.



((I had to look up what the heck chausse were... apparently they're hose... as in the type worn by men during specific portions of the middle ages. Scary.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 08, 2008, 04:37:47 pm**

13th of Felsite

Zefon our brewer gave birth to a girl today. We drank to her health. I think even Zefon may have slipped her something to keep her from crying too much. Hopefully just some of her fabulous beer and not the rum.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 08, 2008, 06:48:29 pm**

13th of Hematite Early summer 1056

The humans arrived again today. Unfortunately they've brought only two wagons with them. I had been hoping for more. All loaded with wood. In any case I was pleased to see Abba again. Innu came as well and was greeted by Baroness-Countess Lokum. Abba jumped down from the wagon beaming.

"Good to see you again. Look, I'm really sorry about last year. I know you needed those supplies but things have been tight."

"Aye, well, that condition has been going around it seems. Glad you could come this year anyways. We'll see you off properly again."

"Well, that's one of the reasons I come. You make my trips very profitable. I brought as much wood as the wagons would carry. Drink and empty barrels too like you asked. I figured you might need some bolts as well, so I've brought the best I could find. Food too of course. Mostly seafood, but it's packed in brine and was fresh when we loaded it."

I looked quickly over the inventory list she had provided. All of it was useful, or useful enough. Even the bolts, though I thought they were a bit overpriced. Not a problem for us of course.

"Looks great. Thanks for bringing us this. We'll take the lot of it."

Abba smiled. It was as if the mention of profit lit up her entire face. And she had a great smile.

"Well, I know I promised you weapons. So I'll deliver on that." I called out to the others who were bringing up our goods to trade. "Just put all that on the wagons. Fill 'em to capacity."

Abba rubbed her hands together gleefully and asked:"Thank you so very much. We've been needing these badly. Not to mention they're fetching a good price too. What all are you loading then?"

Armful after armful of weapons and armor were being loaded on the wagons as we spoke. After the weapons were all on I tossed in a bin of stone crafts and ordered the rest filled with surplus goblin gear.

"Aye, don't mention it. To be honest we've had more goblins here than we'd care for."

It was then that a shout of alarm went out.

"Goblins, on the ramp. Looks like some thieves found the traps!"

I relaxed again. Nothing major. Dwarves began streaming past me to clean up the traps and ramp and remove the gear. A second shout happened almost five minutes later.

"Stop you thief!!!"

The voice sounded like Mafol, one of our smiths and the sound of running could be heard. I called out below:"Oi, shut those gates, quick!"

Seconds later a heavy clang filled the air, muffled by distance.

It was about fifteen minutes later that Mafol returned, slightly bloodsplattered but none the worse for the wear. He grinned and nodded to me as he walked in, carrying one of the goblins shoes. "Got the little blighter. Tossed sand in my eyes to slow me down but closing the gates trapped him. Thanks."

Turning back to Abba I handed her a quick list of what I'd had loaded. She made some mental calculations before she spoke, but I interrupted her first.

"Aye, I know. I'm a terrible merchant. Anyways, there's a dozen bows there, almost five hundred arrows and about two score other weapons. Some are very good quality and almost all of them are iron. That should be a goodly shipment of weapons for now. Next year we'll see about getting you some more."

"Thanks." was all she said before giving me a hug. As she turned to her men to direct the efficient packing of the gear she gave me a wink and said:"You realize that you've giving away over a hundred thousand ingots worth of goods there, right?"

"Aye, but to be honest, I couldn't care less. Most of it is goblin gear, and we've got so much of that we're practically swimming in it. If you'd have brought more wagons we'd have filled them too. The stuff takes up too much space."

"That's why I like you Paulus, you're way to practical."

I grinned before heading below.

While the goods were being loaded and stowed we recieved another alarm. A group of goblins had come down the ramp to ambush us. Only about five or six of them. Hard to tell. Half of them got caught on the traps. Medtom and our Hammerer were helping to clean up the mess from the previous ones and made short work of the others. I sighed. If only they'd brought more wagons we could be clear of this junk. I considered just digging a pit and dumping it all. It was very tempting indeed. But inside my my practical side won out. The stuff could be used... there was no reason to let it go to waste. And spreading the wealth out to those that helped us was a good way towards strengthening our own position in the long run.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 09, 2008, 01:11:35 am**

14th of Galena Summer

The mist from the falls occasionally wafts into our halls now. I'm amazed at what a refreshing difference that makes. We've cleared out a section of stone leading to the falls, about thirty feet up from the bottom. It actually worked out doubly well, since we also found several gems and a rather large vein of silver, both natural and horn silver. We're practically swimming in silver. Though getting it all melted down properly make take a little while still. In any case, it's been a very busy month. I've been up on the upper plateau directing the masons in their work. I'm amazed at how quick our walls up there went up with the newly expanded mason force. Perhaps next season we'll manage to get the northern woods walled in too. That way we won't have to risk our woodcutters.

On the homefront things have gone well also. Nish, one of our guards gave birth again. A boy this time. Not to be outdone the countess Lokum also gave birth, but to a girl, not three days later. And today, our wood burner Lokum gave birth to a boy also. It's just been that sort of month I guess. Still, it's nice to know that we've been able to provide a secure home to raise children in. The cliffs and narrow entrance make it hard for goblins to get in, and kids to wander out. Thankfully.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **MercDraco** on **August 09, 2008, 11:33:29 am**

Name: Draconus
;D
no big on the kitty it was to be a plus considering in my games all my hammerdwarfs get cats who chase after the gobbos..if the gobbo is stupid enough to stab it they get propelled into my fortress (usually more than 1 blow) and then slowly smashed into wall/floor as wounded kitty watches/recovers)

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 09, 2008, 11:47:47 am**

((Ok thanks Draco. I've actually already implemented your character development. I'll just make the name change))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 10, 2008, 03:47:36 pm**

20th of Galena

The Countess Lokum came by last week to pick up a list of the items we had sold to Abba and her crew. Said she wanted to see what we were trading to the humans. It didn't seem unreasonable at the time so I've given it to her. What she apparently decided today, however, is that I wasn't doing enough to serve her. She came barging into my office.

"Paulus, I'm sick and tired of you ignoring my petition to properly furnish my tomb. Why haven't you done anything about it?"

"Lokum, cal-"

"It's Countess Lokum. And I will not be calm. You've been sitting on this for months. I demand you do something about it. And since you've taken so long with it, I want you to find something suitable for my bedroom as well."

I considered telling her that we tried every piece of furniture in the entire fortress and that she had found it lacking. I even considered trying to explain that with the various pieces of furniture there were and the vast variety of metals that existed there were around seventy-nine quadrillion possibilities, and the likelihood of me picking one at random and it being the right one was preposterous. Instead I went with short answer.

"No."

Her eyes narrowed and she advanced a step. "What do you mean, no."

"Do you want the long version? Ok. Hell, no." I had had enough of her outrageous demands. "This is a personal request for you Countess. I am under no specific obligation to comply with your whims in this case, nor, I should point out, do I feel inclined to make much effort to do so. So, if you don't mind. I have a fortress to run."

Her lips were so pursed they seemed to be a thin white line and it looked like she would have kicked some of my furniture over had it not all been stone. Not that I had much furniture. As she was storming off I heard her muttering, but it was too quiet to hear.

I sighed, putting my head in my hands and resting my elbows on my table. Why didn't she understand. It wasn't about her. It was about us, as a clan. Her and her husband paraded around, enjoying the best food, drink and taking their pick of craftsgoods that the rest of us labored to make and assumed that it was her entitlement. To a certain extent I suppose that the law was on her side there. But equally well because of that mindset she failed to understand that it was possible to be great by strengthening those around you. As all of us gained in glory, each of us gained in glory, rather than taking it away from someone else to boost your own standing. Lord Rovod understood this well enough. He labored night or day in the forges and tending the animals. He gave of himself to the clan. Perhaps this was a new way of thinking. Perhaps it didn't go with tradition. Perhaps the Countess would get shoved off a cliff. Considering she never went outside I didn't have much hope for her either way.

Title: Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on August 10, 2008, 04:23:24 pm

5th of Limestone

The dwarven caravan arrived today with our new liason. Apparently we'd gotten a new one and they hadn't informed us yet. He wouldn't even speak to me except to pick up what items we requested and give me a list of what the mountainhomes wanted. Which of course included mostly weapons and armor. A hundred and two percent increase on the value of armors next year. Things must have been going badly.

The merchants brought plenty of useful things, unfortunately they brought no wood. Not a log. I took most of their heavy items so we could load as much as possible on to help cover out quota. Apparently it had been common for the merchants to either fill up too fast or the settlements not to be able to pay so the war tax had been extended five years, after which point if it hadn't been paid settlements would be forced to be abandoned. I wouldn't let that happen here. I knew they needed weapons badly, perhaps even desperately, so I loaded on as many as the space would permit after all the trading. It was a significant amount. Almost a hundred weapons, mostly melee, but a fair number of crossbows as well. A large portion of our inferior iron weapons went. The liason merely nodded and tallied up their value, an approximate ten thousand ingots worth of weapons. Apparently it was both quality and quantity they wanted. I was informed that our tax had risen to our current value and that we now owed roughly two hundred and eighty thousand ingots worth. That was a lot of gear. Perhaps I'd have Aardvark turn out some custom steel sets. Those were worth their weight in gold.

While the traders were here we had a few goblins try to get in. Two thieves were caught in traps, a third was spotted by Fre, who immediately tried to pounce on it. It slashed out with a wicked iron dagger, but Fre quickly dodged to one side, catching it's hand in a lock and snapping it a the wrist. The goblin fled as fast as it's legs would carry it, leaving it's weapon on the ground. A few days later two of our furnace operators, Zan and Medtob were caught in an ambush on the upper plateau. They managed to get the alarm sounded but tried to run and were dragged down by a group of goblin wrestlers before they were run through by a swordgoblin. Aardvark and I had been sparring in the barracks and we immediately headed up the ramp to check it out. We arrived to late, though just barely.

The five goblins turned on us as we crested the ramp and advanced. Four of them were unarmed so it was with no hesitation whatsoever that the two of us charged. The lead goblin tried to tackle me as I approached but a heavy blow in mid-air changed his direction quickly and sent both pieces of him flying away to hit the wall. Aardvark too cleaved in with his axe. A goblin launched itself at him too but he stood his ground and the goblin struck his plate falling stunned to the ground. Seconds later Aardvarks axe buried itself most of the way into it's skull. He punched a second goblin that was advancing in the face, stunning it and breaking it's nose while he yanked his axe out. My sword continued to dance and weave in and out through the goblin before me until the unarmed and mostly unarmored goblin lay in four pieces. The leader should have run then and there, but he advanced on me, sword on sword. A quick thrust and a clumsy block on his part told me enough of his skill. A second thrust, a feint drew out his guard and opened up his other side for a backhanded blow, severing an arm at the elbow. In the second it took for him to look down at his shield arm numbly I had impaled him, puncturing his chest, heart and lungs. A quick glance behind me showed me Aardvark gleefully dismembering the still twitching wrestler remaining. Our furnace operators lay only feet from us. What they were doing up here I didn't know, only that they paid for it with their lives.

On our way back down I slapped Aardvark in the back with my gauntleted hand.

"Nice job. I'd say that was a good enough sparring session don't you?"

"Aye, not bad. I feel better. Pity about those two though."

"Aye. 'Tis a shame. Had they your armor they'd likely be still alive."

"True enough. True enough."



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 11, 2008, 12:06:58 pm**

Coming back in from the ambush Aardvark and I passed the first of the wagons at the bottom of the ramp. The merchants were heading out. Yet as we neared the doors to our home Litast, our mayor, came running out, pale and breathing hard.

"Paulus, there you are. I've been looking everywhere for you. The Countess. Mandate. We can't export gloves."

I was alarmed. The merchants were already underway. "What?"

She paused for a second to catch her breath. "The Countess has mandated that we export no gloves. For the good of the clan. What do we do?"

A grim sentiment stole over me. There was nothing we could do. Short of barring the gates and having the merchants slaughtered to retrieve the dozens of goblin gloves on their wagons. That would be a silly thing to do. Looking at Litast all I could exclaim was, "Pray. Pray it blows over or that she forgets quickly. There is no other choice. If not, we do what we can."

I hadn't even removed my armor before a young guard came into my office.

"Here's a report, sir. Justice to be dispensed."

I nodded and took the list. It was long. Very long. Hammerings, beatings, prison time. Very long indeed. Litast made the list. Eight hammerstrikes, a beating and twenty six days in prison. She'd never survive. My name was on the list as well. Twelve hammerstrikes and seventy six days in prison. This list was madness. Utter insanity. The Countess would kill half the fortress because we had sold goblin gloves, just to prove that she was in charge. Frustration and fury welled up inside me. I strode quickly out of my office, metal boots clinking on the smoothed stone. Blood still covered my armor, and my vision was red-tinged. Had the Countess walked in front of me then and there I might have struck her down. As it was I passed an engraver working on the halls. I grabbed her hammer and chisel.

"Give me those. Go get a drink."

She swallowed and looked up at me as if seeing me for the first time and slowly backed away nodding. I went straight for the prison in the north tower. A few swings of the hammer had removed the chains from the walls and I took them and placed them in a remote unused corner of the building. By the time I returned there were several guards and the Hammerer, along with their unfortunate victims already there.

The Hammerer looked at me. I looked at her.

"What happened here?"

"Jail's closed for repairs."

She merely nodded grimly. She dismissed the other guards and released the dwarves they had brought down, lowering their punishment. Walking up to me she stood toe to toe with me and looked up, but only slightly.

"Don't think that I'll let you make this a habit. You cannot thwart justice."

"I don't intend to. You've seen the list?"

She looked down and backed away a step. "Aye. The countess sent me a copy. She's very ... thorough when she wants to be."

"These dwarves are not criminals. They were doing a job I sent them to do. Had the countess made the mandate before we sold the gloves I'd have been happy to comply with her. But she didn't. She waited until the merchants had already packed up to leave. Her punishments will kill countless innocent dwarves. What a waste. This isn't justice... it's insanity, it's megalomaniacal."

"Aye, to a certain extent. You'll re-establish the prison after this blows over?"

"To be sure."

"You won't interfere in my lawful punishment of criminals?"

"Not in such a way, if I can help it."

"See that you don't. Even I can't pardon everyone on the list though. Surely you know that."

"Do what you can."

She nodded and I left. I headed to my office to wait. It didn't take long. Our Hammerer was true to her word.

It was not half an hour after our discussion that the countess stormed into my office, accompanied by her husband and two of the royal guard.

"What's the meaning of this? These people are criminals. How can you sit there and not see to their proper punishment?"

I was strangely calm. I spoke almost in a whisper.

"These people are not criminals. They are friends, and good workers."

In a fury she turned to her husband.

"Meng, see that those still on the list receive a proper beating. I want no one to get off clean. Justice will be dispensed. I will be vindicated."

He rushed off, smiling as she turned on me and pointed a finger at me. For a second she stood there, unable to find something to say before she turned and left.

Not long after the casualty reports began flooding in. Zon our stoneworker was injured. Zulban our glassmaker had been beaten to death along with Zon our engraver, the one I'd taken the chisel from. Litast, another engraver was badly injured and might never properly recover. Ablel, one of our talented Masons was badly injured, a spinal injury or so I was informed. Ashtesh another engraver was badly injured, a head wound among them. Sodel, one of our five miners was injured. Medtob, one of the engineers I'd trained personally, was injured. Udil, our clothier was injured as was Lokum our woodburner and mother of three. Ducim, one of our Furnace operators was beaten to death as was Melbil, our glassmaker and mother of two children. One only weeks old. That struck me hard. I'd see her child well taken care of. Edzul, another of our masons was badly injured as he worked on the upper wall. Atir, one of our planters was struck in the head and passes in and out of conciousness. We don't know if he'll recover. Cilob, another planter was injured as well, as was Avuz, another woodburner. Litast, the mayor and I were saved for last. Litast didn't survive the beating, and by that time I barely felt mine. Litast had been our only mayor for years. She was well liked and did a tremendous job, it was a true loss. Rith the guard apologized in advance but he had his orders and I understood that. Nish, a younger guard had attempted to administer a beating to Fre but she threatened to remove his manhood with a kitchen knife and I suspect he considered that threat enough of a beating.

I was numb by the end of it. In a day the countess had wreaked more havoc upon our home than years worth of goblin sieges. I overheard her in the halls a day later when asked about it by one of her children. She told him the others got what they deserved and she didn't feel bad about it, and neither should he.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **August 11, 2008, 12:14:47 pm**

((While reading that latest post, I was feeling sad and disheartened... until I saw the part about Fre, and then I laughed. You do a great job with writing, and allow the reader to emphasize with your characters. Loving the story; keep at it!))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 11, 2008, 04:24:32 pm**

5th of Timber

We recieved another small batch of immigrants from the mountain home today. Said they'd heard about us from a group of soldiers that had passed through town. They described Scott down to the slightly broken nose where we'd gotten in a fight as kids. Able bodies all, and after our recent losses, some way perhaps of easing the labor of others.

One was a cheesemaker and him, a peasant and two rangers were drafted into the army as Marksdwarves. One peasant went to the Royal guard and one to the Fortress guard. We also got a woodworker, a metalsmith and a metal crafter (now stoneworker).

I'd been visited by Meng, the countess' consort yesterday. He insisted the fortress needed more lay pewter goods, for it's own betterment. I nodded and told him I'd see to it. He seemed to swell a little at my statement and grinned, somewhat maliciously, saying 'That's right. You do that. Or they'll be Armok to pay.'

P.S. Aardvark has been declared a champion. He's been busy while the forges have been cool. We've spotted what appears to be a vein of lignite and possibly one of Bituminous coal up near the top of the waterfall however, so he might be busy again in a few months, once we've had time to process it.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 11, 2008, 07:41:03 pm**

(Not a journal entry)

I walked down the hallway like normal, the small bag of tools clinking at my side. There were no guards near the countess' door, so I knew that they were out. I believe they were admiring the statuary tonight. A pretty normal occurance since I'd had it installed. They'd taken to having at least one or two of the Royal guards accompany them at all times lately. Perhaps they realize how unpopular they've become. Even a good portion of the guard lost someone they were acquainted with. I was counting on the fact that me visiting the countess was a normal enough occurance.

I had to go back and fetch my surprise from near the kennels. He didn't fit very well in the doubled up bolt of cloth I was using to carry and conceal him, so thankfully he was unconcious. The snake venom I'd slipped him had knocked him unconcious and would last at least another hour. Retracing my steps I entered the countess' room. Small lay pewter crafts lay strewn about on the floor where their children had left them. The front room was their dining hall and office while the back rooms were the sleeping area. What few knew, however, was that there was a third room on the side that we'd initially had carved out but later sealed when it wasn't needed. I'd spent the last week sneaking in to properly connect the mechanisms to open it from elsewhere.

I hastily set my trap.

1st of Moonstone Early winter

((Image if of the actual trap being sprung. Post is below.))



Title: Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Aardvark on August 11, 2008, 07:46:08 pm

Quote from: Paulus Fahlstrom on August 11, 2008, 04:24:32 pm

P.S. Aardvark had been declared a champion. He's been busy while the forges have been cool. We've spotted what appears to be a vein of lignite and possibly one of Bituminous coal up near the top of the waterfall however, so he might be busy again in a few months, once we've had time to process it.

Ehm I don't think he will be able to go back to civilian life after becomming a champion. Ah well atleast he uses what he made himself :)

Title: Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: userpay on August 12, 2008, 12:51:34 am

ooo this sounds like fun, can't wait to see what happens next.

Title: Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on August 12, 2008, 03:32:39 pm

3rd of Moonstone

I had my doubts about springing my trap I'll admit. The countess still carried her infant with her and though her mother did not care for the lives of others it gave me pause to think that the child might come to harm. It was perhaps the thoughts of Melbil and her now motherless children that gave me the mettle necessary to go through with things. Melbil's infant had taken to wandering through the fortress. Everyone gave the child some attention. She was fed when hungry or thirsty and the other children took care of her as well. Perhaps it would be better for the countess' child if it didn't survive, though I knew that not to be true in my heart even if I convinced myself in me head it were otherwise.

After the countess locked herself in her room with her husband for the night was when things had to be done. Their children were still up and playing with some of Urvad's little ones. I went to the south-eastern tower to over see some training that Kuli was participating in. Using the captured goblins of course. It was his test to become a speardwarf officially. Him against two goblins in a room. They still had spears or rather pikes of their own and so, to be honest it was easily a fair fight. Even Melonius had practiced some with his crossbow. There was a hole in the ceiling of the room so it could be seen from above to educate those in training. Melonius was assigned a position up there and a crossbowgoblin was released from a cage below. Both had weapons. Melonius won. But I diverge. I'd linked the lever to release the two goblins in cages for Kuli to fight. What no one else knew what that I'd linked it also to release a third goblin, the axelord, into the countess' rooms.

Kuli performed well, and Urvad oversaw the declaration of speardwarf, but my thoughts were elsewhere. It was perhaps no surprise to me at least when a runner came from the main tower to inform us that a goblin had gotten loose and murdered the countess and her consort. In their own bedchambers. I went to survey the damage. Apparently a Royal guard had heard their screams and tried to get into the room. The door had been locked and Ragnar had been summoned. He ordered the guard to stand back and with two mighty kicks shivered the stone door in half near the middle. The goblin stood in the room still, surprised at the method of entry, standing over the fallen. Ragnar had charged but the goblin leaped aside. A return stroke nicked Ragnar's leg. Ragnar too swung out, but it was blocked, as was the goblin's next swipe. The two foes circled, one axe dripping fresh blood, the other unblemished. The next pass gave the advantage clearly in favor of the goblin though. He opened up a deep gash on Ragnar's arm through his armor, staining it bright red. The goblin grinned thinking he had the advantage. He perhaps hadn't counted on Ragnar's ferocity as the dwarf charged into him, bowling the diminuitive goblin over before bringing his axe down on top of the prone creature. Two more blows ended the life of the stunned goblin.

The countess had died, thrown against the bedroom wall. Her consort had perished, beheaded in the first room. It was to my relief that their child survived, and though traumatized, was perhaps too young to realize what had truly taken place.

Ragnar was escorted by a guard to his small bedroom, the one he kept when he didn't want to be bothered, so he could recover. I visited him the next day, bringing two mugs of sewer brew to share. It was my way of saying sorry. I knew he liked the stuff and the healers wanted him on water only, which I was sure would chafe him. He gave me a knowing look when I walked in.

"Hoy. I thought you might like this. How's the arm?"

He grunted, taking the drink and a long pull from it before responding. "Ah, fine stuff that. Arm's good 'nough. Can't keep me down too long."

I nodded, wanting to say more, but not finding the words. I never was good at talking. Ragnar seemed to understand. After a minute of awkward silence he cleared his throat.

"Ya do what ye have to do, mate."

I nodded, raising my glass to his in a toast.

"For the good of the clan."

"Aye, fer the good o' the clan."

We drank our glasses to the last drop. It burned on the way down, though Ragnar didn't seem to notice much.

As I was leaving I asked.

"Mind if I appoint Aardvark as sheriff while you're down?"

"Nah, been meanin' to get away and do some practice. Been a while since I sparred."

We left it at that. I left him to heal. I still had our philosopher to visit. She was a nice sort and had taken to collecting goblin gear 'to better understand them'. I wanted to ask her if she was willing to set up a school. For the young and old alike. The children at least deserved a proper education. It was better to get while they were young. And it would keep their minds off of recent losses.

((Yeah... sorry about that Aardvark. I had no idea once a champion there was no turning back. I can make champions Sheriff though. Still, you've provided the fort with about 40 suits of full chain and 40 of full plate so we should be ok, though losing such an awesome armorer is somewhat of a pain.))

Title: Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on August 13, 2008, 12:56:41 pm

17th of Moonstone

Dealing with the aftermath of the countess' punishment continues despite her absence. We've got at least a dozen dwarves on bed-rest still, which means two things. One: the two mechanics and I who have been less than busy of late have been tending the wounded. It usually involves me speaking with people, something that I'm not good at and therefore usually dislike. But it has been good for me. Secondly, it means that our well is running dangerously low. When the water level became sufficient to walk in I had to order the miners to channel out beneath the wells so that the remainder of the water would collect in the deeper portions. I can only hope the spring thaw comes soon enough for us to refill the place. I've also taken the liberty of deepening it further so we have more capacity in the future.

It's possible that because of the recent activities with which I've been busy, meetings, tending the wounded and what not that I've gotten

to know the dwarves of the fortress better. Still, I'll admit I was quite surprised to be voted in as Mayor to take over in Litast's place. It was strange moving into the mayoral rooms. I've redecorated some, and requested some statues made out of silver, for both our statuary and because I think it'd be nice to have a reminder of Atun. Lord Rovod was happy enough to comply and made a very nice statue of him, and though the likeness isn't quite lifelike, the workmanship is remarkable.

I feel I should also include what steps I've taken to dissuade future powermongers that may come among us. Upon their death I had the remains of the late countess and her consort buried in common granite coffins and placed in a room on the top corner of the north tower. The roof was removed exposing them to the elements, an indignity in death at the very least, and then I requested one of our masons to wall off the room entirely. Their memory would be eroded by time quicky. The mason happened to be the brother of Litast, our departed mayor and son of Zon, the engraver, both of whom perished due to the madness of Lokum. He was more than happy to oblige my request. I could not bring myself to stooping to leaving them unburied, as the two were dwarves, and despite their atrocities deserved at least a measure of dignity in death. But I have also assured now that their resting place will remain ignomius. I think I'll have Zon and Litast, the mother and daughter that have given so much to this fortress buried in their grand mausoleum instead.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 13, 2008, 03:13:05 pm**

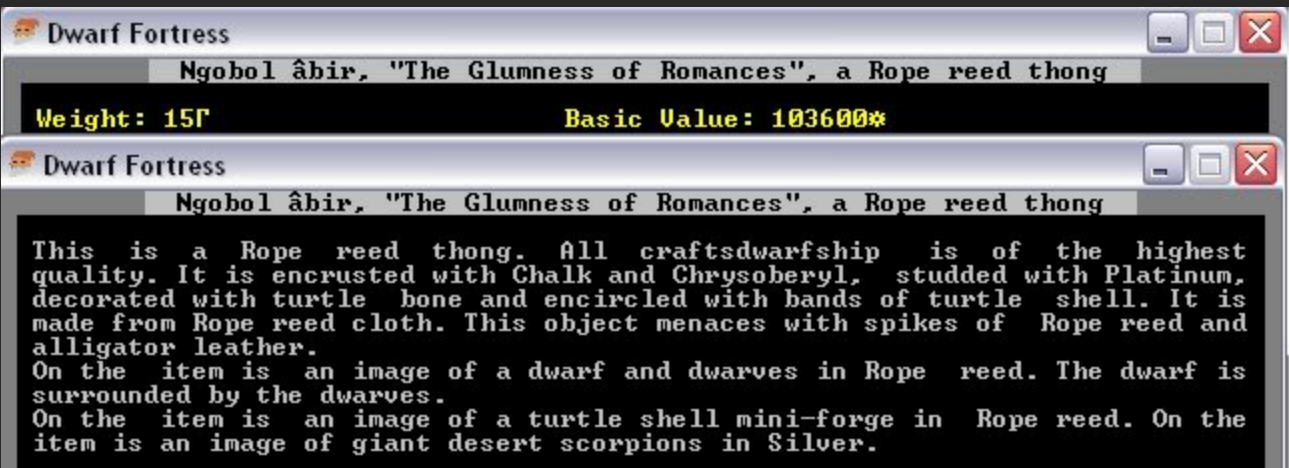
8th of Opal

Life continues on despite all hardships. Of that I am continually reminded. Kogan, one of our new planters gave birth to a boy today. Celebrations were held that evening.

16th of Obsidian

One of our wounded proclaimed that she'd been in bed enough and that she had a work to do. Despite having a seeping wound that was bandaged up on one of her arms, a reminder of the countess still, she made her way slowly through the fortress to her clothier workshop. She then proceeded to gather three bolts of Rope reed cloth, a turtle shell and bones, a bar of silver and one of platinum, a large piece of alligator leather and some rough chrysoberyls. I'm not sure what she's intending to make with all that, but considering the value of the goods she took it's sure to be impressive looking. I had to go and look up details on her in my office as I couldn't recall her name, and I wanted to speak with some of her friends about what she was likely to make. It turns out she didn't have any. Though it did explain a lot about the artifact she crafted.

She calls it Ngobol Abir. I call it a plea for help. I don't even want to know about the scorpion.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 13, 2008, 03:31:13 pm**



11th of Granite 1058

It is a new year once again. My how the time passes.

The elves have arrived again to trade with us. They seemed to look at our growing forests with pleasure as we've been true to our word and haven't cut hardly any wood. Of course, I'm hoping they let their guard down and forget to ask next time, by which time it will be ready to harvest again.

They were insightful enough to know that we would want wood brought, and though it wasn't much, the twenty logs they brought were very welcome. They brought several bins of cloth too. And a small basket of strawberries. Strange people the elves. I'm not sure I could ever get used to living on a diet of nothing but berries. In any case, we emptied their mules, and returned the cloth to them. We didn't really need cloth, but the bins it came in were useful.

While the elves were here one of our woodcutters spotted a kobold thief up on the roof where we stored many of our tradegoods. He shouted out a quick alarm before smacking the creature so hard it flew off the roof, above and over the edge of the cliff and onto the other side of the ravine. With that warning I posted Urvad near the entrance with her squad and had the premises checked over. A second kobold was found on the roof by a guard and given similar flying lessons, albeit in a different direction. A third kobold had the misfortune of being found by one of our planters, a sturdy lass who throttled the thing with one hand, while fending off it's attacks using a dagger with the other. No more such thieves were found and we called down the alarm after a day or two.

The elven traders were always strange to me. Our mutual cultures are so very different I can't really forsee us ever being true allies, but it never hurt to have friends, especially in the short run. And with us having a glut of goods, since we lost practically a whole year a of trading not that long ago, I decided it was time to properly cultivate a good political friendship. The only way I knew how. I presented them with a gift, to be given to their leaders. And then we proceeded to fill up their animals with stone crafts, instruments and toys. Large quantities of them. They nodded politely when I said I wanted to give them a gift. Their eyes widened as I began bringing out bins of superb stone crafts. Lots of the goods were of exquisite workmanship, true works of masters. I think they forgot how to speak they were

in shock. From what I had heard they were used to being treated with disdain by the dwarves, and responded in kind. By my calculations they been given about twenty thousand ingots worth of stone crafts as a present. I'm pretty sure it made their month. They said the druids would be very pleased. Druids? Stranger and stranger if you ask me. Nevertheless, they were potential allies, at least in the short term.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 13, 2008, 03:43:12 pm**

1st of Felsite

Summers must be slow around here as we always seem to have an influx of births around springtime. Nish, our prolific guard has given birth to another girl. And Urvad, not to be outdone has given birth to a boy. Her fifth child since she's joined us.

Having children running around the fortress really does make it seem more like a home and less like a military fortress. I had to check our official listing to make sure of my numbers but we apparently have twenty three children currently on our books. Three have grown to adulthood while here. That is roughly twenty percent of our population. It certainly keeps things lively around here. To be honest I'm not sure that we'll ever get that helmet back from Urvad. As soon as one outgrows it she replaces it with another child. She carries the child around in it attached by a worn, but thick, leather belt.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 14, 2008, 01:15:30 pm**

10th of Felsite

I received a pleasant surprise today. I knew that our Hammerer had sent a message to the mountainhome informing them of the deaths of our countess. Such was common practice. But we received our replacements this afternoon as a large group of immigrants came from the east road.

In the lead was the Countess Zefon along with her consort, my own brother Tarin. Of course with the additions that the new immigrants brought we reached the status of Dutchy and the Hammerer oversaw the official title enstatement. I greeted Tarin at the door as Lord Rovod, our resident noble, greeted Zefon. I hadn't expected to see Tarin at all, least of all here. I'd heard of him getting involved with the daughter of a noble, but that was years ago and I never found out what had happened. As it turns out Dutchess Zefon's family was an old royal line from Lalkol back when it had been the mountainhome centuries before. Though the glory of the place had declined when the grandfather of our current king moved the capital to Sazirgeb it still remained a large trade city, her family having taken over the guidance of it. From what Tarin told me they had met when she came to see the wonders of Kilrudmorul and he had decided to accompany her back to Lalkol when things started going bad at Kilrudmorul.

To hear him tell she is quite the appreciator of the finer things in life. Art and natural beauty being chief among her interests. After her brief greeting with Lord Rovod, Tarin was able to introduce us.

"Zefon, this is my brother, and holder of this place, Paulus."

"Ah, Paulus! What a pleasure it is to finally meet you in person. Tarin has spoken often of your exploits as children together."

I looked at Tarin with a raised eyebrow. "Well, Dutchess, one can't always believe everything one hears. Especially from someone so personally involved in any ... um... exploits."

She laughed lightly. "Don't worry. I assure you your combined indiscretions will remain safe. I hear you have a most remarkable dining hall, do show us around."

"Very well, Lady, if you would both come this way... I think you'll also appreciate our statuary. You've arrived just in time for the river to thaw. The waterfall is spectacular at this time of year."

Tarin whispered to me as we began our descent:"Are you doing to the roads what I think you're doing?"

"Yup." I grinned.

He rolled his eyes. "Why not pave them in gold?"

I laughed. "We don't have gold in abundance. Otherwise I'd consider it." I winked. "Now, on with the tour."

I saw them situated in their rooms and on my way back requested some furniture made to accomodate their needs. Tarin had informed me the Dutchess was fond of Nickel. I thought we could manage something made out of that.

I was able to visit with the others as well. Three wrestlers, one with a wife and two children, and a dog and cat. Four peasants and two trappers. All these were inducted into the military. A planter, milker, cheesemaker, gemsetter, mason, soaper, tanner, fisherdwarf and jeweler as well. Twenty three more dwarves in all.

Apparently one of the wrestlers, Mosus, had served for a time in Scott's squad in the King's army. He'd been wounded and left behind to recover. When it took longer than anticipated he was honorably discharged and decided to move here with his family, having heard about it from Scott. Several of the group that came were his friends and acquaintances. His wife seems the intelligent sort, and not given to excitement. Apparently from a conversation with her she also believes in keeping secrets secrets. I've been looking for a new clerk, since it's simply too much for me to keep up with now, and think she'll fit the bill nicely.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 14, 2008, 01:58:53 pm**

12th of Hematite

The air itself begins to grow warm. It's been a fine year for weather, to be honest, and so perhaps that is the reason I'm doubly suspicious that we've seen not a single goblin around here for more than a year. Is it possible that they've given up? I hope, yet somehow do not believe that they have. The last two sieges in rapid succession hopefully gave them pause, so that seems like the more logical explanation. We continue to prepare for eventualities. The walls on the upper plateau have been expanded, or are in the process of it. We hope to finish encompassing the northern meadow in it's entirety. There are some veins of magnetite and even platinum exposed there, in addition to the plants and trees of the meadow itself. It would be a nice thing for us not to have to be exposed while working there as in previous years.

The dutchess is concerned for the security of the fort and so Tarin has requested that we make some ballistae parts. I think I have just the place for them.

Abba and Innu came at the head of the human caravan today as well. They are always a welcome sight, and the supplies they bring, while no longer absolutely vital, are always welcome. And Abba certainly not dissapoint this year. She managed to load her wagons with nearly fifty logs, in addition to a variety of metal bars and some charcoal. They also brought several varieties of seafood, packed in salt, as usual, which will provide us with some variety in our diet. I wanted to wait until Innu had rejoined us before loading up the wagons, as I wanted to make sure they had room for our gift for them this year. I needn't have worried. They had plenty of space. I presented Innu

with a token of two masterfully wrought granite crowns to be given to her parents. In addition, to further help them in their fight against the goblins I gave them roughly thirty thousand ingots worth of weapons and ammo. Innu thanked us graciously and said that our contribution would surely save many human lives and go far to strengthening diplomatic ties between our races. If they needed anything after this year she said it would be backpacks, footgear and food for their military.

Abba was of course pleased, as always when I ordered her wagon to be filled with trade goods. While the wagons were being filled I took the opportunity to catch up on things with her. It seemed that the war was essentially a stalemate. The initial attacks of the goblins had caught both our races unprepared, but after that wore off things were starting to go better for us. Only time would tell. She still heard rumors of a large goblin force operating near the accursed tundra, and only whispers that spoke of a larger force moving across the mountains from the south and west.

Only time would tell whether they were true or merely rumors.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 14, 2008, 02:01:17 pm**

2nd of Malachite

Zefon, our brewer gave birth to a boy today. I went to visit her and though she had her hands full with the child she assured me that we wouldn't lack drink. She'd been working hard in the previous months and we have a vast stockpile of it. Barrels and barrels to be more accurate. We had gotten some from Abba as well, a nice diversity to our homebrews, but it was a relief to know that morale wouldn't be affected by lack of booze.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 15, 2008, 11:22:14 am**

16th of Limestone

The dwarven caravan arrived today. The dutchess greeted the liason while I got to deal with the merchants. I really wanted to get our tax paid this year so last year I had ordered a large quantity of heavy but inexpensive items. Mostly wood and metal bars. They didn't bring as much wood as I would have liked but they did bring some bituminous coal and lignite. And of course plenty of metal. Once our liason had finished up I had goods loaded up to pay our taxes. Finally.

The liason made notes and estimated values as I went.

Almost a hundred assorted weapons, nearly two dozen crossbow included, valued at roughly twenty thousand ingots. I hadn't tossed in any of our steel weapons. I wanted to keep those.

Roughly four to five hundred iron and steel bolts, valued at about thirty five thousand ingots.

And the pie de resistance, six full suits of Aardvarks finely crafted steel plate armor. Each suit was valued at roughly fourty five thousand ingots, bringing the total for all six and the other items to three hundred and twenty five thousand ingots.

The liason made copious notes, and went to inspect the armor personally. It was very impressive craftdwarfship. Aardvark's mark engraved on the shoulders of the plate or the inside lip of every piece. It was a shame that he was kept so busy as sheriff. Ragnar had recovered quickly and had begun training with the military, but it seemed like more often than not he was lounging around the statuary with one of the axedwarves from his squad.

It was good to be done with the tax, officially. Though I wouldn't have been surprised if Agna found some way of making us pay a second time. For that reason, if nothing else I made the liason sign an affidavit and receipt of goods for our records. He didn't seem to happy to do so, but complied well enough. I could understand his position. If anything happened to that cargo between here and there he would be held responsible for it, rather than being able to claim we hadn't paid in full. Still, we'd paid well and over what was required, so there was a little leeway, should some of the bolts need to be used, or one of the guards decided to claim a better weapon.

P.S. Two goblin thieves were caught in the traps as they approached the trade quarters. Needless to say they didn't survive.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 15, 2008, 01:02:41 pm**

21st of Limestone

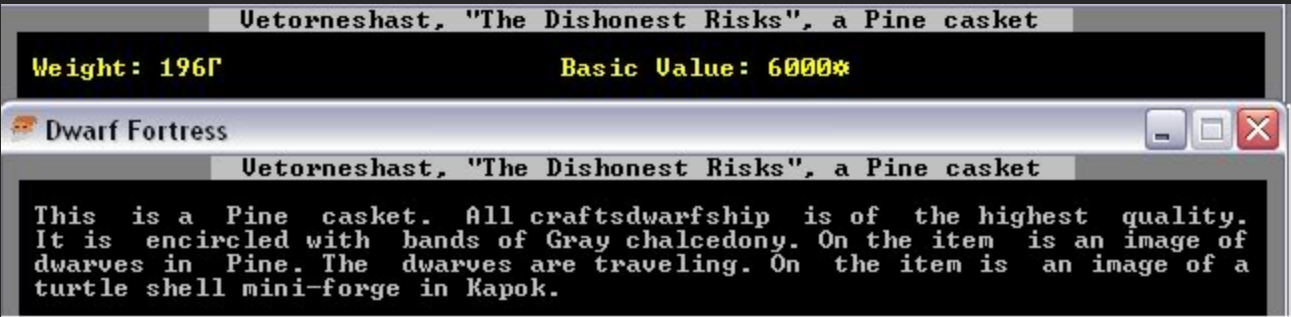
Our workers were ambushed up on the north slopes as they were finishing the walls there. Thankfully Ragnar had posted Fath and his small squad of champions, Urvad and hers as well as Melonius as cover up there. One group came from the east, a guard, two macegoblins and three wrestlers. Fath's group, three champions began cleaving their way through them to help one of our masons who was being chased by one of their number. A second group showed up from the north which Urvad's group dealt with. Melonius I believe got at least one with his crossbow as it was coming around the corner. The unfortunate news is that apparently in the commotion a goblin babysnatcher managed to sneak up on Urvad and steal her son. She dismembered it violently but apparently in the ensuing struggle must have missed a second one, since at the end of things Datan was missing. All that was found of him was, unfortunately, his hand, which must have been hit in the fighting. We do not know if he survived and was taken or died of the wound. It is a loss and I'm not sure Urvad has quite registered it. She still carries around the extra helmet. (Strangely enough her profile didn't show her son as missing, though a notice popped up saying he had been stolen. Literally all I know I've found was his hand.)

We can only hope that some time in the future we will hear of young Datan one-handed.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 17, 2008, 10:36:45 pm**

24th of Sandstone

Our carpenter, Thikut was taken by a creative mood. He was very secretive about it. He's also been spending a lot of time with our Hammerer. Apparently that must have influenced things because he produced a very nice pine coffin. Calls it Vetorneshast, or the Dishonest Ruins. Perhaps it's his way of supporting her in keeping law around here.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 18, 2008, 01:31:58 pm**

9th of Timber 1058

We received another batch of migrants today. Only ten, with a donkey and a cow. There were four peasants, a weaver, a fishery worker, a gem setter, two cooks and a woodcutter. Though many of them are useful, equally many we don't truly need duplicates of their skills. We've gotten roughly eight cooks in all our migrations, and none comes near Fre. She's gotten quite legendary in her skills and routinely comes up with masterful fare, despite some limitations in variety.

In any case, this brings our total population to one hundred and seventy one. Quite the metropolis now. At least batches of migrants no longer mean we'll have to tighten our belts. We have quite the food supply.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 18, 2008, 04:03:47 pm**

16th of Moonstone

We were in the cliffs working on clearing out a vein of lignite when we spotted movement along the road to the east. Our gates were closed, as they'd been all winter, so there was little danger of impending attack, but I ordered a scout onto the roof of the north building to keep an eye on the situation. It was a good thing. The goblins have returned in force. Or something like it.

With our gates down there was little they could do but mill around outside our walls. Still, the scout estimated there were about eighty goblins, give or take, which made them a significant threat. I spoke, turning to the recruit:

"Go let Ragnar know what's going on. And have him begin a muster. Marksdwarves and two squads at the doors. Tell him we'll finish up clearing out this vein and let the road work finish before he can have his fun."

The recruit looked at me strangely as I ended but dutifully ran off to find Ragnar. Aardvark was keeping the peace below, and I knew Ragnar would appreciate the action, particularly after being bed-ridden for nearly a month recovering from the last wound. I looked to the east as the Mafol finished mining out the last of the lignite and others came to haul it away.

Looked like it wouldn't be a boring winter after all.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 19, 2008, 12:02:54 pm**

It didn't take more than a few days to finish our work on the cliffs and I locked the access door behind me as I headed down. I passed Ragnar and his squad on my way through the gates. All five of them were assembled, as was Kuli and Zuglar, our speardwarves. The marksdwarves were stationed in a tight line at the trade gate and ready for action. Ragnar nodded to me and indicated that he and his dwarves were ready so I went down and pulled the lever opening our outer gates. One of our scouts was on the roof ready to signal down when all the goblins were inside and I would pull the lever again, closing the gates when that was the case.

The goblins must have been surprised that the gates simply opened before them, as it took them a little while to decide to enter. I have no doubt that in their experience sieges simply did not work that way. The defenders didn't just lower their gates to let you in, at least very often. This was not a normal place though, and we were more than happy to let them in. Just not out. There was no checking out.

The heavy iron gates slamming shut behind them must have been some indication that they were in trouble, but only those in the rear probably even noticed. The first group, wrestlers and pikegoblins hit our line of traps, and with predictable efficiency the entire first platoon of goblins dissappeared, most caught in cage traps, the rest spread liberally across our entryway in small pieces. These days the red stain there didn't go away.

Our ballistae operators got in a few shots as the goblins were charging. One hefty bolt, larger than a spear passed cleanly through one goblin before scattering the others behind it as it fell shocked to the ground. Two other platoons of goblin fighters passed the corner as our trade doors opened, revealing a fully armed row of eight trained marksdwarves. The clacking of crossbows was like hail on a roof, and soon a flurry of arrows leveled those in the front, stalling the rush in it's entirety.

Ragnar called out:"Oi, lads. No heroics. No one charges the greenies without da squad, so stick together. And give 'em hell!"

It was then that Ragnar and the others charged out. The goblins were pinned down among the corpses of the dead and dying when seven fully armed and armored defenders broke into their ranks. Ragnar, flanked by Deler and Doren the two axedwarves from Kilrudmorul sewed quick destruction before them. Kuli and Zuglar no less effective, moving to the east to engage the few crossbow goblins with the enemy. In minutes, or less the force had been reduced to a few goblins in cages shouting obscenities or begging for mercy. Popping his head around the corner Ragnar spotted the other two platoons sheepishly holding back. So he decided to take a quick break and headed down the to hall to get a quick drink.

Unfortunately it was then that the fourth group, the one with eight goblin archers decided it was their turn to try the defenses. Kuli and Zuglar took position right around the corner, out of sight of their archers until the last second. Behind them stood our own marksdwarves, Thorvad and Melonius among them.

The first archer to step around the corner made the mistake of thinking the weapons trap inactive and was impaled from below for his mistake. But soon the rest showed up as well and the fighting began in earnest. A hail of fire erupted from our side, answered only sporadically as the goblins moved and dodged to try to get away from the deadly spears in their midst. Kuli pinned a goblin to the ground by the shoulder and was twisting his spear in the wound when a goblin took a shot at him, sending a bolt through his foot. One of our

bolts came out of the swarm and struck that same goblin in the chest, then a second in the neck, ensuring that Kuli not get hit again, but the damage had been done. Gritting his teeth against the pain Kuli placed his good foot against the goblins chest and removed his spear, stabbing out and up, even while prone, to slay the goblin laying near him. Zuglar and the marksdwarves finished the rest off, Zuglar pulling Kuli out of visibility behind the wall the second the fighting was over.

The last goblin platoon looked to be reluctant to enter the fray and hovered around two corners near the foot of the ramp, unable to flee and unwilling to attack. Ragnar's squad returned in this state and after making sure Kuli and the others were all right proceeded to check out the situation. Seeing no archers among the group Ragnar quickly took initiative, running out to attack the group, leaving his surprised squad to follow him. He had slain four goblins before the rest of them even caught up.

And so ended the siege of Winter 1058.

Unfortunately during clean-up one of our jumpy engineers accidentally loosed a ballistae into the clean-up crew, striking and killing Ducim, one of our masons. He was the only casualty. Kuli was injured, taking a bolt in the foot, but it looked like he would recover. Mosus, from Ragnar's squad took a pike in the foot during the last charge and may be recovering for some time. Eighty goblins came, none left. Ten of those were captured, to be used by Ragnar and his crew for practice.

It will take weeks to clean up the mess. I've had enough dealing with goblin gear and have simply ordered the lot of it dumped. Sans the weapons, shields and ammo, which are still useable.

((Melonius you got two kills, Kuli, despite being injured you got three. Ragnar ... got sixteen. Below is the aftermath, two screens were stitched together with Paint.))



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 20, 2008, 12:46:45 pm**

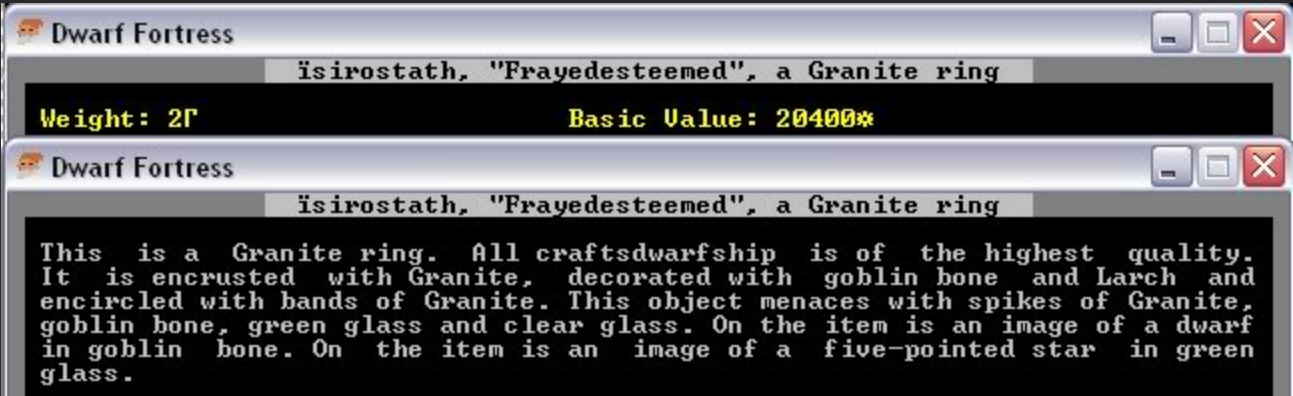
10th of Obsidian

Urvad has filled that helmet-sling yet again. Another boy. She seems happier now and I'll have to see to it that she isn't on the front lines lest she lose another son.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 20, 2008, 06:41:08 pm**

17th of Obsidian

It seems the recent bloodshed has awoken some spirit or other nearby. Astesh, one of our engravers, became possessed while he slept and ambled into the craftsddwarf workshop. He grabbed several pieces of granite, some raw green and clear glass and a larch log before wandering onto the battlefield to strip the flesh off of the remaining corpses that we haven't gotten around to cleaning up yet. He took eight bones from goblin corpses to use. Very disturbing. With it he's produced Isirostath, or Frayedesteemed, a granite ring. I'm not sure anyone wants to wear it for fear the spirit that possessed him now inhabits it.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 21, 2008, 11:29:39 am**

9th of Granite 1059

Spring has arrived without ceremony again this year. On the bright side, many of our injured have now recovered. Only two continue abed. One that was greviously wounded from the Countess' beatings and Mosus, who was injured during the last siege. Kuli has recovered completely, excepting that old neck injury.

The elves arrived again today. The diplomat returned, too. And rather than congratulate us on keeping within our 'designated' quota he merely set another one. Were it not for the fact that our forests continue to grow I'd argue his point. Perhaps next year I shall and see what comes of it. They only brought cloth and a few berries, so much that was not useful. Still, we managed to pawn off some of the silk the goblins were carrying, and gained some goods at no cost to us.

The outer walls on the upper plateau are complete, but work continues bringing them up to snuff, and height, as well as adding ramparts on the inside. Mining below unearthed several deposits of gems, including Cat's eye, Morganite, Kunzite and a large patch of emeralds. In addition we've found three veins of Cassierite and one of natural silver. The silver is particularly useful as we've been using much of it to beautify our external fortress, as well as having crafted several statues out of it for the statuary.

Our population and wealth continues to grow. We are even as I write rivalling the mountain-home itself for wealth, size and prosperity. I dare say this fortress has the additional benefit of being vastly more secure as well. Here's to a new year. The traditional party continues on new years, though the toasts have left off due to sheer volume. I believe the hall is getting crowded, especially at large parties so I'll have to see about getting some more tables and chairs made to expand the hall into the rest of the available space we've got there.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 21, 2008, 03:17:54 pm**

21st of Granite

Some of the engineers working on the road were set upon by a goblin ambush. They ran back towards the main entrance screaming. Fortunately for them Ragnar wasn't far from the doors and he called out his squad, rushing to help the fleeing dwarves. Only two of the goblins had whips, the others had no weapons.

Ragnar waded into the lead goblin and it practically exploded, it's chest caved in, sending it flying to strike a goblin behind it. Two of the so-called wrestlers tried vainly to juke Ragnar into letting them slip past as the other whip-wielder followed after Kikrost, our woodcrafter, and was led into our traps, killing the creature.

Ragnar was busy teaching the two goblins some finer points of wrestling, namely, it's hard to pin someone when you're missing an arm.

Two other goblins were spotted to the east but they fled before the gates could be closed on them.

Nothing like a little action to invigorate things.

On a side note, it's been rather cold this year. I've mandated that mittens be made. I'd done this already twice this winter but somehow I could never seem to find a pair when I was needing them.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 21, 2008, 03:59:23 pm**

2nd of Felsite

Let's get the good news out first I suppose. Udil, our metalsmith, gave birth to a girl just yesterday. Nish, one of our guards, gave birth to a boy not long before that.

Unfortunately the dutchess approached me today with a request. Well, it was actually more of a mandate, but she phrased it very politely.

"Hi Paulus. Tarin really appreciates you getting those ballistae parts he mandated finished so quickly. And I really love that you've put up tables for us in the statuary. It's such a nice place to eat. I hear that you're the go-to guy when you want things to get done around here so I figured I'd let you know. When I was a child I once had the opportunity of visiting a place with my father. They had this remarkable artifact that had been made out of a bluish metal. They called it Adamantine. I've not seen something like that since, but I was hoping that you would be able to get something made out of it. Thanks."

I hadn't gotten a word in edgewise after 'Hi.'. She wanted something made out of adamantine? That was something I was pretty sure we wouldn't be able to accomplish. Owing to the fact that I'd never seen the stuff either.

At least she wasn't complaining about her inferior, but really quite spectacular, furnishings. Still, I'd have to see if maybe the stuff could be imported.

I wasn't going to hold my breath.

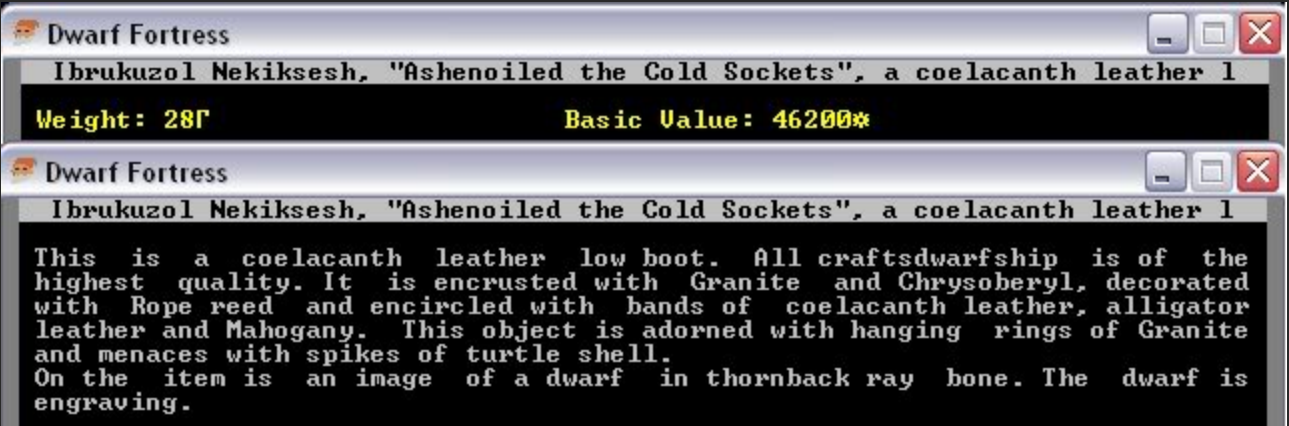
Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 21, 2008, 06:46:08 pm**

11th of Hematite

Two things of note occurred today. Mosus, our leatherworker, was taken by a fey mood today as he was hauling in lumber from the upper plateau. I'm not quite sure what came over him, except uncontrolled giggling and then a mad dash to the leatherwork shop. He grabbed a few pieces of leather and a great variety of other goods and began work.

The humans have diplomat arrived today as well and claims the wagons with the merchants are not far behind.

P.S. Mosus finished his work quickly. He calls it Ibrukuzol Nekiksesh, or Ashenoiled the Cold Sockets. Considering it's a pair of low leather boots I'm guessing it's in reference to walking outside in the snow. We've been known to occasionally strew ashes over the ramp to help improve traction in the winter. Still, it's a strange name for the things.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 22, 2008, 01:09:01 pm**

15th of Hematite

Abba and her crew arrived today, true to fashion. She eyed the silver road that we'd been installing since last year on her approach. For some reason she seemed a little sad, but not overly so.

"Hoy Abba, and welcome again to our little home."

She laughed lightly and from the heart. "Paulus, good to see you again. I don't believe a word of it for even a second. No one that paves their entryway in silver can truly be modest about their dwelling. You've turned this place into a spectacular fortress, and I insist on seeing the place before I go this year."

"Well lass, I'll see that that happens then. So let's get the trading done so the others can get to hauling."

"Indeed. I think you'll be pleased with what we've brought this year. I know what you're always complaining about so I've brought you

three and a half wagon loads of lumber, dry and seasoned and ready for your use."

I grinned. "You know us well then. Let's see what else you've brought and get down to brass tacks."

I loved trading with the humans. They brought a huge diversity, including leather which we were also short on, and plenty of drink of all kinds as well as our annual batch of reasonably fresh seafood. And just like Abba mentioned, over a hundred logs. Plenty to keep our forges going for a season or two and sufficient to make a few more beds. We cleaned out their entire inventory.

While others were busy hauling goods I showed Abba around our upper fortifications, our entrance gates, the statuary and frozen waterfall (which only thaws for about a month a year), the now legendary dining hall where we dined on some of Fre's magnificent cooking, the sleeping halls below the dining room and the shops beneath those as well. I also showed her the mausoleums, the specialty crafts shops in the north tower, where we worked on our best goods. The arena in the south tower where four goblin cages were being fitted in for combat training. The place was rather extensive.

I learned as we walked that she had bought out one of the senior merchant guild members, thus earning her a spot on the governing body and a healthy share of the guild profits. Apparently her lucrative trips to our holding had helped considerably in that, but it also meant that she would no longer be coming personally to Dorenemal any more. It was a melancholy feeling, wishing her well in her life, but knowing that she would no longer be around to share the summer breezes with. That we would no longer be able to sit on the roof above the trade depot and share a mug of their/our strawberry liqueor.

There wasn't much to say between us. Not that I didn't want to say something, but I lacked the words to say it properly.

At least we could see her off properly. We may have emptied their wagons, but we filled their wagons back up too. Not just the usual goblin junk, but plenty of our crafts, clothes, weapons and armor. I gave her an offering for their king of some of our stone crafts, selecting out a masterwork obsidian ring to give to her personally, a token to remember the dwarves of Dorenemal by. To remember me by.

By the time we were done there was not room on their wagons and animals for another earring.

Abba didn't seem to be in a hurry to leave, but once everything was carefully stowed away the inevitable day came. I saw them out, the wagons moving slowly off into the distance, the humans gradually faded from view all looking off towards the distant road ahead. All except the one riding in the lead wagon.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 23, 2008, 10:39:03 am**

16th of Malachite

Kogan, one of our planters, gave birth to a girl. We celebrated that evening.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 23, 2008, 11:03:19 pm**

19th of Malachite

It appears I hadn't been paying attention as much as I should have while the humans were here. Our dutchess had decided in the middle of trading that we didn't have enough amulets around the place and forbade we export them. I'd already gifted a batch of twelve to the king through Abba and there was no way I could get them back. Mistem our Hammerer came to my office today, a smirk on her face, as she informed me of my punishment.

"Paulus, for crimes against the dutchess you are hereby sentenced to serve no less than seventy nine days in prison. After which time you will be given seven hammerstrokes. How do you plead?"

"Well, I suppose I'm guilty. I did order those trinkets to be traded." I supposed this was my opportunity to pay back in some small measure for what I had done. I would not argue this time. I deserved what justice could mete out.

She smiled.

"It's nice to hear you admit that, though honestly, it wouldn't have changed the outcome. Once charged the perpetrators always receive punishment irregardless. I hope you learn a lesson about the importance of justice and law from this. I don't expect it will do you much good."

My heart sank. Had it really come to that?

"How many others?"

"Just three. Two are to serve prison time alone. A third was sentenced to two hammerstrikes."

"I hope he survives."

"Perhaps. Not many do."

At least I had some company in the jail. The black obsidian walls and bare iron chains provided a nice contrast to the freedom we had all enjoyed. Three dwarves were already there and looked hopeful when I walked down.

"Have ye come to help us out then Paulus?"

I looked at the hammerer behind me who just shook her head.

"Nay, I've come to join you. Looks like I'll be in good company."

I could only remember the name of one, though now it too escapes me. He was Aardvark's armoring apprentice. Showed promise.

Mistem locked me into a corner of the room, somewhat apart from the others. Three months. That would be a long time. At least our new clerk was able to smuggle me my journal and some writing material. Bembul, the new mayor, came to visit me as well. Wanted to know what he should focus on while I was away.

It hadn't surprised me much when he showed up. It didn't do to have a prosperous place like this having a Mayor in the lockup. I approved of Bembul. He was the brother of Litast, our former mayor, and son of Zon. He would do what was right by the clan.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 25, 2008, 12:17:57 pm**

Middle of Limestone I think

I'm beginning to understand the threat of imprisonment. There are three of us down here, but I've long since run out of things to say to the others. Hardly anyone else comes. Rarely do we get food or water, even less visitors. I seem to be one of the exceptions.

Tarin came by to see me, looking apologetic. His wife hadn't been aware that I'd broken her mandate until Mistem had informed her of it. Mistem had also been the one to encourage the sentence. The dutchess believed in imprisonment as a punishment. A very effective one I'm learning. Mistem believed in a more corporeal form of punishment and apparently had persuaded her that I deserved it, being a repeat offender.

Generally when we're alone it is pitch dark in here so I have been unable to write at all. I think Bembul felt bad for me and left me a small tallow candle and a striker. I dare not waste the light.

We heard the wagons through the stone a day or two ago. It's hard to tell time in here. It must be the fall caravan. Everyone is likely very busy, and normally I would be too. That is what I miss most. Being able to be productive. This forced inaction grates on my nerves. I fear for the clan. They have good dwarves in responsible positions, though, so to a certain extent I know my fears are unfounded.

I also fear the upcoming hammering. There have been few infractions not related to the Countess Lokum incident, and well, this one. But of those others not a dwarf has survived Mistem's hammer. She does not vocalize her thoughts about the three she has killed, but neither does she take pride in the slain. That is something of a consolation I suppose. The two goblins she has killed are another matter of course. In any case, I must spare the candle, and close. I will write again when I can no longer stand the boredom and darkness.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 26, 2008, 12:35:46 am**

I've lost all track of time in here. I try to sleep when I am tired but with the chains it is difficult. I forget what it's like to be sated and full. But I had to light the candle today to check. Tun, our would be armorer hasn't moved for three days and we fear the worst. He's been hunting for vermin, calling out for the rats to come to him for the past two weeks. It seems we've been forgotten in this place, though I can hear the sounds of activity through the walls. I regret to say it's more likely that everyone is busy with the fall caravan that no one can be spared to see to our needs. And criminals are lower down on the priority list than the wounded, of which we still likely have some.

Neither of us can reach him to check to see, but I don't see his chest moving so we fear the worst.

The fellow in here with me is one of our leatherworkers. I'd speak more to him, but I really have so little to say. He talks frequently though, just to pass the time. Seems he used to be a fisherdwarf. I've enjoyed hearing his stories of the sea to the east where he grew up. It sounds peaceful. I think I'd enjoy fishing. Right now I'd enjoy fish. And water even.

I try to keep my mind busy, but Ie can only do the multiplication tables for so long before the numbers begin to overwhelm even me. I think I stopped somewhere in the five thousands last. I've tried to excercise to keep myself reasonably fit, but the constant hunger makes it more difficult. I fear I've lost some weight the last while.

Our candle is nearly gone and I doubt I'd be lucky enough to get another. I'll save it for now.

By my count it's been about sixty days since I've been put here. My water bucket is dry and has been for two days.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 26, 2008, 01:01:49 pm**

A group of dwarves came to bury Tun after he died. Somehow they found the time to bring us food and drink as well. It seems strange that we were fed water and a fabulous horse stew. Almost incongruous. I know it must be Fre's cooking though. Nothing else tastes quite like it. Hunger is indeed the worlds best sauce.

My other companion finished his sentence. At least the first portion of it. He was sentenced to two hammerstrikes as well. He was unchained while Mistem came to deliver the blows. The first dropped him to the floor like a rock. Utterly unconcious. It must have that he was laying on the ground for the second blow but the hit to the chest hit solidly and I heard ribs breaking. He stopped breathing seconds later. Mistem sighed as she walked out, not even looking back at me.

My candle is almost gone and I wanted to record these things before it goes completely. Already it is starting to gutter. I am alone down here now. It seems quite peaceful. I've taken to meditation. Listening to the earth around me I can hear what is going on in our fortress and the hills around it. The silence is profound and even the slightest movement on my part shatters it utterly. Perhaps that is why when I am motionless I am able to feel the sounds of the earth around me. Perhaps it is a gift I have been given, a bit of the earthsense. I've heard of such things, though it seems to be more common in miners. In any case, I've only two weeks left until the end of my prison term. And I have much to reflect on.

I shall use the last of the light as a focus for meditation before it too flees the darkness that approaches.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 26, 2008, 06:52:35 pm**

I could hear her coming two floors away. Mistem tended to walk on her heels in a slightly irregular pattern and that made her tread both loud and very distinct. She brought a torch with her and I lowered my eyes against the light at first.

"Paulus Monomozkak are you ready for your sentence?"

I stood. "I am at peace and ready for the punishment for my crimes."

She nodded and unslung her hammer.

Her first swing came in low, lower than I expected and I made the mistake of tightening the muscles in my leg. I felt a distinct pop when it hit in my knee and pain entered my body. I gritted my teeth. Mistem counted out the strokes. Perhaps because it was her ritual for performing justice, perhaps so she wouldn't strike too often, I wasn't sure. Her second blow caught me in the upper torso, knocking the air from my lungs and sending a wave of heat through my chest. I saw her third blow coming and made the mistake of moving my shield arm to intercept, as I would have in combat. Her blow clipped my hand hard, breaking bones and damaging fingers.

"Three."

I grunted and she swung again, clipping my other leg, sending me to the floor. The pain radiated from almost all of me and threatened to overwhelm my deprived senses. Her next blow caught me in the lower back, bruising flesh and damaging bone.

"Five."

I rolled over as best I could to face her when her next strike came in on my right arm again. The sound of her voice saying "Six." was all I knew for a few seconds. I lapsed into brief unconciousness the pain overcoming me. I came to only seconds later, in time to hear Mistem count out.

"Seven. You have paid for your crimes according to our law."

She began walking away without checking to see if I were alive or dead.

I gritted my teeth against the pain and leveraged myself onto my good arm looking at her depart. Groaning inwardly I managed to call out to her:

"Mistem..."

She turned towards me.

"You hit like a girl."

A brief smile passed across her face before she turned away. I heard her say as the darkness closed in again.

"Flattery will get you nowhere, Paulus. I'll send someone to carry you to the infirmary."

I passed out again. It might have been seconds or minutes later that I opened my eyes again and saw Kogan, one of our woodcutters carrying me towards the sickbeds.

I write this now two days after the fact. I've slept off much of my fatigue and though I'll be sore and mending for some time I feel remarkably well. At least my pen hand is uninjured so I can write.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Glacies** on **August 26, 2008, 07:15:57 pm**

Yay! This is an excellent story, keep it up! :)

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 27, 2008, 12:02:18 pm**

10th of Timber

Lolor our clerk and recent immigrant gave birth today to a healty boy. I've asked if I could help take over some of the recording duties while I'm in bed. Writing is something I don't mind doing and it keeps me busy while I recover.

Bembul has come to visit me as well, filling me in how the projects are coming along, both on the upper fortifications as well as the road, which is nearing completion. Things progress well. The dwarven caravan apparently hasn't left quite yet, as they're still loading the wagons, but they should be departing before too long.

My brother and his wife have also come to visit me and wish me well. I think he convinced her to come, and from what I could tell she perhaps felt a little guilty that I was in the state I was in. I told her I bore her no ill will, nor hard feelings.

Still, can't let mandates like that run unchecked. I scribbled a note for Bembul to give to the merchants since he was acting as broker in my place.

Still, things have been running smoothly, in part because everything was well organized beforehand, but also because the others that have taken over in my absence are very capable dwarves.

In all honesty it has been nice to be able to step away from it all for a while and approach things with a fresh perspective. I've got some projects I want to see finished, but I think I've given up on my pet project for the time being. There are other things more important.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 27, 2008, 06:55:10 pm**

15th of Timber

At least I'm not as bored as when I was in the dungeons three floors below me. Still, I find this necessary inactivity somewhat annoying as well. I want to be out doing something, regardless of it's utility at this point. I can hear the sparring going on in the barracks just outside the room, sometimes a match extends into the infirmary itself, for which I'm grateful.

The bookkeeping is easy to keep up with I find. It's second nature to me, especially with Lolor doing all the leg work as it were.

I called in Draco to see me today. With Aardvark as a champion and our sheriff he'll not have time to see to the crafting of more armor (for which I apologize... sad to lose such a great armorer) and we were needing some new equipment with the recent additions. Draco had no experience in armorsmithing, but he was a decent enough weaponsmith and knew his way around the forges as well as metals. Besides, even though his military training was going well, equipping our soldiers took preference. It was better to have five well-equipped soldiers on the battlefield than a dozen ill-outfitted ones. There tended to be fewer deaths as well, and that included in training. No, we needed a new armorer, and with Tun gone the way of the world, Draco was the next logical choice.

Not that I thought he'd equal Aardvark any time soon. But one had to start somewhere.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 28, 2008, 06:23:09 pm**

16th of Moonstone

I heard the dwarven merchants leaving finally. Bembul tells me we've cleaned up a lot of the loose crafts, toys and instruments that have

been cluttering up our roof. It's about time. Heh. Of course, we've been cleaning up after the goblins since we started and there simply wasn't time nor room for that too.

As an additionally security, the gates were closed behind them, ensuring that we have a peaceful winter, and permitting our road crew to work without danger.

I've spoken with Bembul as well about some more personal matters. I can't see to it myself, and it's very appropriate that he take care of this.

Zon and Litast were moved to their own room in the mausoleum level. I'd had it smoothed, widened and engraved in preparation, but hadn't gotten around to getting it done before my incarceration. Mother and daughter now rest side by side in honor, surrounded by engravings of their clan. I assured Bembul that if he wanted he could be buried with them when it was his time to go. He assured me that would be fine, but had no intention of joining them just yet. As family it was, however his right to claim any possessions of theirs, and when they were exhumed he took the opportunity to claim a fine, if slightly soiled silk sock from his mother and a boot in similar condition from his sister. It seemed strange to me, but I wasn't about to deny him those memories.

Bembul apparently has decided that we don't have enough weapons here and has mandated several spears. I've asked Draco to take the order and make them in steel. No reason to do things shoddily.

I hadn't realized this but there is a human merchant outside the infirmary waiting to meet with me. I asked Bembul about it and apparently the human insisted I be the one to speak with him and that he wasn't leaving until I had. Apparently he's enjoying our hospitality. He waited outside the prison while I was incarcerated too. He must be a patient sort. For his sake and mine I hope I recover fast. Too much bedrest and I'll start to atrophy. Heh. Yeah. Right.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 29, 2008, 11:39:14 am**

22nd of Moonstone

Apparently Urvad gave birth to a son earlier today. I'd congratulate her, but I don't see her that often since I'm still bed-ridden. In fact I don't see much of what is going on, nor can I properly meet with someone in my state so it is rather frustrating. It seems that she's named the child after me. Paulus Fikodsodel, or Glazeshields. I certainly hope the name brings the child luck.

16th of Opal

Nish, our prolific guard gave birth today to a girl.

21st of Opal

Zefon, my brother's wife, the dutchess gave birth to a girl today. That makes a son and a daughter for them. Tarin and his wife came to visit me and I was able to congratulate both of them.

11th of Obsidian

With the gates shut it's been a quiet winter. Which is good, since a third of the fortress is busy chasing children. Mosus, our leatherworker gave birth to a girl today. We've had so many new children recently it amazes me. With the new additions our population is as high as it's ever been. Nearly two hundred souls.

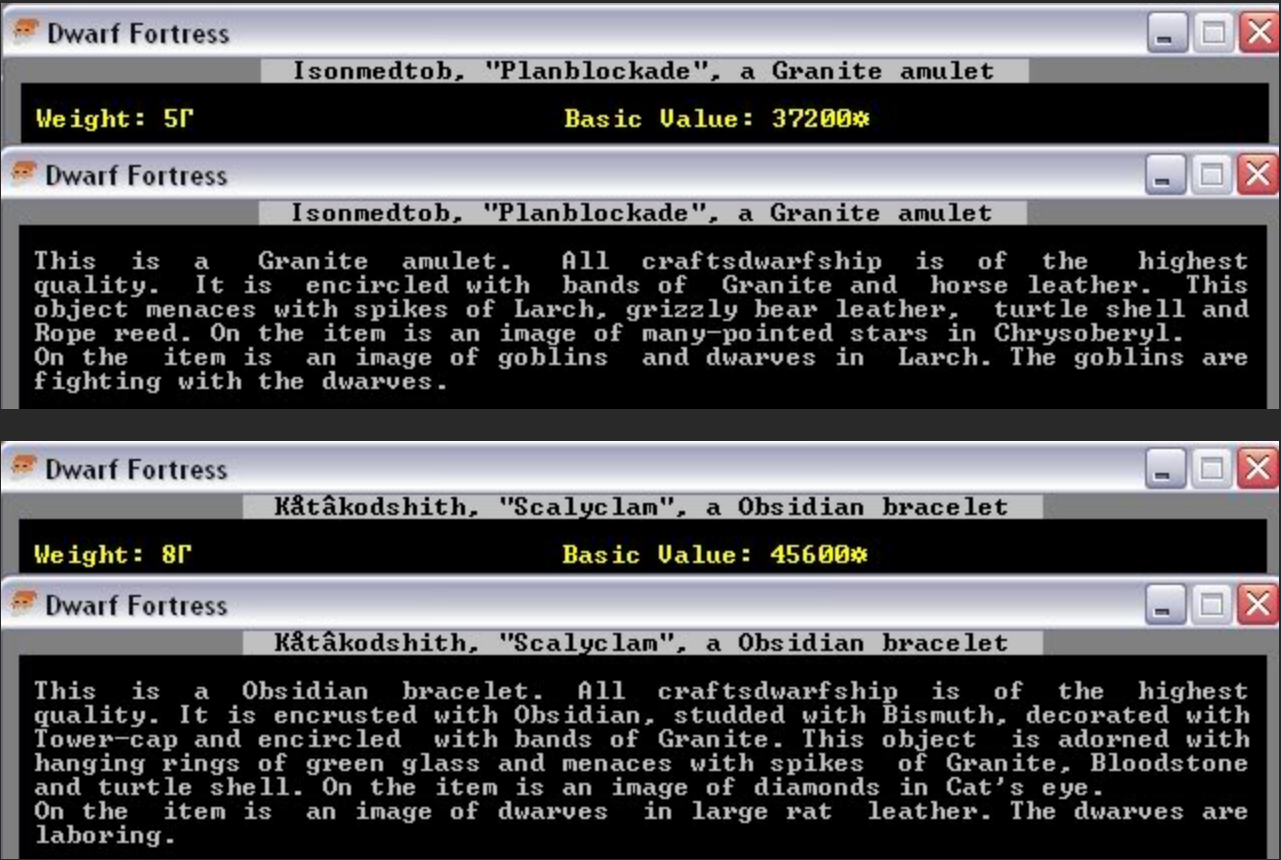
Work on the projects continues, or so Bembul informs me. It's cussedly difficult to stay in bed when I want to get up and see to things. I tried the other day, but my leg still can't take the weight. I fell because of it, but thankfully no one was around to see my embarrassment. My hand is better though, which is a relief, though my arm still pains me.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 29, 2008, 06:38:48 pm**

16th of Obsidian

Lolor, one of our legendary stonecrafters created a wonderful artifact. He calls it Isonmedtob, or Planblockade, after our defensive arrangement. It is a granite amulet and having seen it I heartily approve.

Apparently while I was imprisoned there was another such artifact made, along more original lines. It was made with obsidian, and clearly hinted at the work ethic of this fortress itself. Both items are truly stunning pieces of workdwarfship. I felt better just seeing them.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 29, 2008, 06:49:56 pm**

1st of Granite 1060

A decade has passed at this our home. Though I'm still lamed and my arm pains me I am alive and recovering, despite feeling useless. At least the food is good. Fre has improved, though I thought that impossible. The festivities continue below, and the low roar of so many dwarves drinking together reaches even here. Ragnar brought me a mug of sewerbrew, despite me not being overly fond of it. Still, it is

alcohol, which I've been missing, and I don't think he's aware that it's not my favorite.

In addition, Bembul informs me that the engineering crew is putting the final touches on our road work today. That in and of itself is remarkable. The entire road, where it was not stone, is now paved in silver. Bembul even informed me that we still have plenty of the metal itself, despite the paving project. Perhaps I'll think up some good use for it, though I'll have to save some of it for future plans.

Speaking of future plans, I've asked Bembul to oversee the clearing of the three upper floors of the south-east building in preparation.

Things are going well indeed.

(Attached is a listing of fortress information provided by Paulus)

Dwarf Fortress

Metropolis Dorenemal, "Diamondsense"

1st Granite, 1060, Early Spring

Animals

Kitchen

Stone

Stocks

Prices

Currency

Justice

Created Wealth:

3921128*

Population:

198

Weapons:

43885*

Champions

18

Armor and Garb:

1367268*

Miners

5

Furniture:

165850*

Woodworkers

6

Other Objects:

606105*

Stoneworkers

13

Architecture:

678938*

Rangers

2

Displayed:

215872*

Metal Smiths

3

Held/Worn:

843210*

Jewelers

3

Craftedwarves

13

Imported Wealth:

567081*

Nobles/Admins

7

Exported Wealth:

56732*

Peasants

3

Children

33

Food Stores:

3086

Fishing Workings

3

Meat

134

Farmers

31

Fish

85

Engineers

11

Plant

250

Trained Animals

A None

Other Animals

A 17

Recruits

7

Hammerdwarves

1

Hammer Lords

1

Speardwarves

2

Spearmasters

None

Marksdwarves

12

Elite Mrksdwrvs

None

Wrestlers

6

Elite Wrestlers

2

((For all those of you that have characters, if you want to get an update on them let me know and I'll post one. I've decided not to do them routinely, but have no problem with it if you are interested.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **sneakey pete** on **August 29, 2008, 11:04:52 pm**

10 years, congratulations!

Don't suppose you could upload a map to the map archive, or would that give away your secret project?

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 01, 2008, 05:44:48 pm**

18th of Granite

I heard some animals coming along the pathway outside my building. Which, at this time of the year, typically means the elves have come to trade. I heard a shout from the sentry at the roof not long after and then the activity began in the area of the trade post. Despite being bed-ridden healing I've noticed that if I pay attention I can sense much of what is going on around me. I can hear much through the stone, feel the earth shaking at a footstep, see in my mind's eye what is anticipated or expected.

The usual preparations begin, bringing some goods to the Depot to trade. Perhaps the elves would bring wood this year.

Tarin entered my room to converse with me not too long after the elves have arrived.

"Paulus, the Dutchess wanted to know about previous relations with the elves. It seems that they're insisting we cut no more than a hundred trees again."

I cursed silently. Their requests had been easy enough to grant when the forests were re-growing, but they were not ready to be harvested once more, and the elves, true to fashion, could not accept that we cut too many. Our forges had lain cold too long.

"Did they bring wood with them to trade?"

Tarin shook his head, sighing in disgust. "Not a branch."

"Well, it is technically her choice, as she is the Dutchess, but our forests are ripe for harvesting. Perhaps if we decline their demands this year they will be more reasonable next year. And if we work quick we can harvest all our lumber before they come again. That way it won't be an issue if they ask us again next year, we won't have trees to cut at that point."

Tarin nodded, understanding my intent quickly and smiled, agreeing. "I'll let her know what you think about the matter. She's in the meeting now and wanted to know how relations have been with them."

"Better than most, honestly. We've given them good deals for what they've brought, and complied with their requests so far. One year shouldn't damage our relations too much."

He left.

If all went well the elves would not be happy, but there was little they could do about it. And though my plans were slowly coming on, being able to harvest the lumber and get our furnaces running again would help us in many ways. Not the least of which was to finish equipping our ever-increasing armed forces. I'd seen some soldiers sparring without helmets the other day. A dangerous proposition when wielding axes.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 02, 2008, 01:33:34 pm**

20th of Granite

Tarin and I were discussing the wood situation with Bembul yesterday. The elves always arrive from the east and leave to the west. That works rather well for us.

We've ordered the lower forest to be harvested in it's entirety. Two squads of military were ordered out to protect them, which is probably good since a baby snatcher was caught and killed as the squads headed out.

An ambush was also spotted on the ramp, but foolishly they wandered into the traps, or fled.

The lower plateau will be harvested while the elves are here. And the rest can be harvested later at our convenience. Most of the upper

plateau is within our walls now and the lumber up there as well.

We'll have our forges and burners up and running as soon as the elves leave. Not that we necessarily fear any retribution from them, nor even an attack, but in times of war it's best not to be fighting on two fronts.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 02, 2008, 01:59:32 pm**

25th of Granite

Zefon, our brewer gave birth to a boy today. Apparently she sent someone up to tell me, and sent me a mug of beer with the news. I certainly appreciated it. People keep trying to bring me water. Don't ask me why. Nothing wrong with a little kip now and again when recovering.

((Oh, and I totally plan on both posting a map and putting the world up on DFFD when I'm done with this part and before I move on to the next part of the story-line. So don't worry. I'll try to make this place fun to explore... if you can find the secret ways in...))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 02, 2008, 02:23:56 pm**

11th of Slate

Aardvark apparently held a 'training' exhibition with the remaining goblin captives. I heard about it from some guards that were sparring near my room and managed to get a relatively complete story of what it entailed. Apparently Aardvark felt the fortress guard wasn't getting enough hands on experience. I'll admit they have a rough job. They don't have the prestige that the Royal guard does, nor do they get the action that the military sees. Put that together and the Fortress guard is generally considered the place to go when you're crippled, old or completely inept. Admittedly that's a very unfair assessment of our guard, as we have several champions in their midst. Five I think. In any case, rumors had been floating around that Aardvark wasn't the same sort of military leader that Ragnar had been, since he was first and foremost our armorer, and had very few kills under his belt.

That comparison as well is unfair and largely unfounded. Both Ragnar and Aardvark are exceptional warriors and talented in many other areas. But after Fre nearly gutted a dwarf for speaking ill of Aardvark in her hearing I suspect that he felt he needed to put down the rumors with force, lest his lover do it for him. The remaining five goblins were brought to our combat arena, a guard, two pikegoblins, a wrestler and a crossbowgoblin. Aardvark dressed in his finest armor, steel plate so well crafted and tempered it had a faint blue sheen to it. He was locked in and the goblins were released. All at the same time.

Most soldiers would fare well at even two or three to one odds, but five to one is typically considered borderline crazy. Well, except around here. There are plenty around here that have survived far worse odds. There are also sufficient who haven't.

Aardvark fought superbly by all accounts. In fact, apparently the skirmish lasted less than five minutes, much to the dissapointment of the spectators on the upper gallery. Still, several of them got sprayed with blood and one got pelted with a goblin arm that went flying. In the end the goblins lay dead, Aardvark stood untouched, and I've heard no one speak even glibly about his effectiveness.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 02, 2008, 06:28:44 pm**

23rd of Slate

I heard the sound of the incoming dwarves long before I got any other sign of their presence. Of course, blowing large granite horns makes it sort of obvious. A cry went up from the walls shortly thereafter.

"The King has arrived with a full entourage!"

I smiled. Despite being injured still my plans were progressing. The presence of the king here with a full entourage could only mean one thing. The history texts were right. Though it did not happen too commonly the king had the ability to choose where he or she would house their government. It was not uncommon for them to move around routinely should a more stable, richer or defensible position be found, depending on the needs of the kingdom at the time. The last move had occurred nearly a hundred and fifty years ago, moving the capital from Lalkol, near the accursed tundra, further south to Sazirgeb, which was much more conducive to trade.

The shift to here would confirm what I suspected. The war weighed heavily on the king's mind and a defensible fortress like Dorenemal was preferred for safety's sake in these times. Practically, it meant several things for us. We were now a mountainhome. More importantly we were the Mountainhome. The king's court would be moved here and with the vast majority of the populace being members of the Fahlstrom clan it significantly boosted our ability to withstand Agna's plots, which would now risk the king's wrath in addition to our own if discovered. I'd had rooms carved out, smoothed and engraved for their arrival for three years now. That had been the easy part. Furnishing them up to proper expectations was a little more difficult. But again, I'd been preparing there as well, though we were undoubtedly not quite up to snuff. Still, the horns blowing brought change to this place. And I believe it to be change for the better.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 03, 2008, 11:43:11 am**

16th of Felsite

I heard the news as they were bringing a fresh batch of lumber in. Amost, a cheesemaker new to our fortress, died in the lower lakes. Apparently he was unfamiliar with our spring thaw and ventured out onto the lake carrying a pine log. The combined weight was too much for the ice and he broke through. We were unable to retrieve his corpse as we have no way of draining a lake of that size. We'll have to wait for it to freeze.

Apparently the Dutchess continues her hunt for adamantine items. At least Tarin is more reasonable in his mandates. Bins, ballistae parts and the occasional item made from zinc. This time it was Led, our resident hunter who put himself out of a job turned bonecarver, who for some strange reason bore the penalty for not being able to come up with adamantine. He was ordered to receive five hammerstrikes and amazingly he survived. Or course, I probably shouldn't be surprised. As the only hunter to live for so long out in the wilds around our place, before the walls went up, and the creator of one of our artifacts he is rather imposing for a dwarf. Thankfully he is also quieter, though we do get into some interesting discussions now that we're quartered together in the infirmary. He's got two mangled arms to match my legs. But he's a tough cookie so I have no doubt he'll heal up well enough given a bit of time.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 03, 2008, 06:09:11 pm**

10th of Hematite

A hazy mist filled my vision, scenes of a great temple being built only partly obscured by the cloud. I was seeing the grand edifice from above, though in my mind, I knew that was impossible. Drums rang out from the four points of the temple, and a great fire rose to obscure my vision with smoke. The sound continued though, penetrating the haze with an uncanny clarity.

I awoke, covered in a light sweat despite the coolness of the air. I could still hear a throbbing in my ears that I knew to be the pounding

of my heart. But there was another throb, lower that sounded through the stone. Sounds of many feet, too small to be human, too loud to be elven or kobold, too light to be dwarven. The goblins had come again. In my minds eye I could see them approaching, half a hill crest away from the fortress. I lay in silence for many minutes wondering if I was beginning to go crazy. Led was breathing rhythmically in the bed across the room and I found myself focusing again on the sounds. I could still hear them, but was unsure now of their reality.

That is, until the watch above us cried out.

"A vile force of darkness has arrived! We are besieged! Raise the gates!"

The sound of heavy iron gates being raised from the ground was clear to any in the neighboring building, but the goblins were not quite there yet.

It was some time before the gates were droppped again, allowing the goblins into our ready-made trap. I wasn't sure who was coordinating the combat until I heard Aardvark barking out commands as he approached the main gates. He was only a wall or two away from me, and with soldiers coming in and out of the building his voice carried on the light wind easily.

Apparently there were five groups that had been spotted. Two from the lower east, and two from the upper west and a fifth from the upper east. When the gates went down a mighty howling and scraping of metal on metal filled the air as the hate-filled goblins began pouring into our home, treading on our silvered road and making their way to our gates where they hoped to overwhelm us. Four of the groups were inside our trap when it sprang shut. The fifth group had made no move to enter, remaining instead on the upper slope prowling about our wall. I heard Aardvark order some archers up there to pick them off as well as possible before the main attack could begin.

Apparently Melonius was the first to make it up there, though Fre wasn't far behind. I heard them arguing as they came back down. Rather I should say, Melonius was arguing with Fre, insisting that she'd taken two of his kills, goblins that he'd injured first. Fre saluted Aardvark and reported that the goblins on the slopes had been driven off. Five had been killed by her hand.

I could see the exchange almost as if I were present. Melonius behind her sulking since he'd only gotten two injuries while she had stolen her kills, assuming, erroneously, in his mind that since she was the cook and he a true marksman he had the greater skill with a bow and that it was her luck that had granted her the feat. Secretly, I think Fre had simply grabbed a larger quiver, not that her skill with a bow was inferior to Mel's. After she reported she gave Aardvark a peck on the cheek and told him she'd have a hot meal for him when he finished up here and went below. Waving his hand in dismissal Aardvark waved Melonius off as well, turning to Kuli and Zuglar, both speardwarves in the army.

The goblins got to stew in the trap for a few days. I could hear them beating on the walls from time to time, checking to make sure that they were sound, and trying to find a way out of the goblin deathtrap that Dorenemal had become.

Several days later as I was meditating during a night I could not sleep, I felt the gates being eased open. Aardvark, Kuli and Zuglar slipped out into the chill night air as silent as possible given the fact that they likely wore full plate and were armed to the teeth. The goblins in their foolishness had separated into groups in our halls and slowly the three crept along, slaying goblins that saw them before a general alarm could be raised. The nearly score goblins on the ramp and near the upper gate perished in a combined assault as Aardvark rapped on the stone, signalling the engineer to fire the newly installed ballistae overlooking the upper gate-hall. They had two shots, but were very effective. A single heavy bolt slew three, passing clean through the surprised first goblin and clipping two others, one in the side and the other in the head. It was not long before they bled to death.

That was the moment the three charged the remaining goblins. Kuli took the lead charging into the pack and stabbing out on his left and right, causing fear and confusion in the ranks of enemy before focusing on a single victim which he stabbed and bore to the ground beneath his spear, twisting it in the wound until the goblin stopped thrashing. Aardvark and Zuglar were approaching from behind, catching up after picking off a straggler lower down on the ramp. Kuli spun, catching a blow meant for him on his weapon, and a second on his shield as he brought his spear in tightly before thrusting out at the goblin's head. It took the goblin in the eye, lodging firmly in the wound, and falling out of Kuli's hands as the goblin fell to the ground unconscious. Being unarmed didn't stop him from beating two goblins to death and finishing off the one that had his spear lodged firmly in it's skull before the battle was over.

The three retreated back to the fort to rearm quickly before heading out again, Kuli grabbing a spare weapon just in case. The final group of goblins was out near the eastern gate, camped on the cliff-side in a group numbering roughly thirty. The three approached stealthily, spotting the group from around the corner of the building before charging. Aardvark led this time, with the other two flanking him paces behind. I was exhilarated just sensing the battle, the clash of steel on iron the cries of goblins as they were thrown, or jumped from the cliff to escape the wrath of the three juggernauts from Dorenemal. Almost the entire group was pinned against the bluff as the three rushed in, and later during clean-up the corpses of four goblins were found at the bottom of the cliffs, one in the lake a good thirty feet from the rock face.

The siege had been swift and brutal, but not dangerous for us. I heard of only a single serious injury, a mason on the upper walls that had been hit by a bolt of crossbowgoblins as they were coming in. His wits and reflexes saved him by jumping behind a section of wall. No other injuries had been reported. Ten goblins had gotten away, the group that hadn't entered the fort proper. Seventy goblins lay dead, staining the silver road red.



((That's Aardvark in blue, Kuli in white and Zuglar in yellow.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 04, 2008, 12:31:00 pm**

10th of Galena

Kogan, our planter, gave birth to a boy today.

A more interesting turn of events has given me much to think about however. Led was asleep in the other bed despite the noise from two sparring royal guard. It was surprising then that they stopped suddenly when a third guard entered. This was a new one. I didn't recognize him at all. Warning bells went off in my brain and I began thinking of ways that I could use to defend myself or escape if needed. There weren't many options.

The two guards that had been sparring saluted the third and ran to secure the doors to the room while the other walked back to the door and spoke briefly with someone in a hushed tone before coming back and standing near the foot of my bed. Only a short while later a cloaked figure entered and pulled up the orthoclase chair next to my bed, sitting down and staring at me in silence for a few seconds. The hood she, I was convinced it was a she at least, wore concealed her appearance sufficiently.

It was she who broke the silence, a pleasant but penetrating voice asking:

"Do you know who I am?"

"I have a few guesses."

She nodded for me to continue with my explanation.

"There are two possible options. You are not someone I recognize by voice, nor by the way you move, so you must have been in the most recent group that arrived. You also retain command of the royal guard. Which means you are either the wife of the advisor, Agna, or the wife of the King. Agna would not have wanted to come here, but there is little his wife would have to say to me, particularly in person. So you must be the Queen-consort."

She chuckled lightly before turning to her guard.

"See I warned you that he was perceptive."

Turning to me she began removing her hood when a soft knock at the door was heard. A silvery glint of metal and precious stones could be seen on her head before it was again covered and she quickly made for the other door with her guard. She left quickly and silently, but not before whispering:

"Perceptive you are, but not completely correct. I expect better by the next time I visit."

In a heart-beat the room was again empty, but shortly thereafter someone came to bring a bucket of water for Led and saw to his thirst. It had been a strange meeting. One that hinted at many things, and I was missing something. I needed to think.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 04, 2008, 04:18:00 pm**

13th of Galena

I was looking at the temple again. It was not finished, even in my dreams, but it's magnificence could not be denied, even unfinished. The silver star of the mountain called out to me, beckoned me to come, but still I resisted, for what reason I knew not. Though it was my creation, in this I was not mistaken, it was not for me. I had chosen my path. Turning I saw a cliff with a way running from the temple to the top of it where a building stood. As I began along the way a figure, cloaked in shadow approached, beckoning me to the side of the road. The figure did not threaten, nor did it seem menacing but I knew somehow that to go with it was dangerous. The figure approached again and I awoke with a start.

The lanterns were still dimmed and I could hear Led's steady slow breathing. The building was quiet, as quiet as ever in the mountain-home that never truly slept. As I sat listening I saw the door moving inward and the unnamed royal guard walked in quickly before turning and whispering to someone outside again.

She came and approached my bed, sitting on the chair next to it. A soft perfume wafted from her, filling my nostrils with the scent of pine and sand. She cocked her head quizzically and merely said:

"Well?"

"My apologies my Queen. I'd bend the knee or something if I could, but it seems that my legs simply won't function properly."

Withdrawing her hood revealed that she was smiling, and a brief look at her guard conveyed the sense that she'd gotten the better of him again. Waving my offer away she continued.

"Don't worry about that Paulus. Mistern is a very effective judicar as she is expected to be. Yes, I know about your sentencing and punishment. I know a great many things about this place that others merely guess at. But I wanted to meet you, the organizer and founder of this newest mountain-home. I get ahead of myself though, let me introduce myself.

I am Zuglar Oslanstettad, Queen of the Big Knife tribe, daughter to the former-king, may his bones remain forever undisturbed."

It seemed fitting to me that her name in the common tongue meant "Windtax".

"I wanted to meet you and thank you for the excellent work you have done here, providing a safe haven for our people in this time of strife. Know that you have pleased me, though not in as many ways as I might have hoped."

"My Lady, we have done our best here to create a place ..." She cut me off with a wave.

"Do you truly understand what it is you have done here? Do you?"

I raised an eyebrow and cocked my head to one side as I thought quickly about what she had said. I wasn't quite sure where she was going with this. She sighed and looked again at her guard. Addressing him she spoke:

"I believe you were right in this Rith. How one can see so much yet so little is beyond me." Turning again to me, she continued.

"Very well then. Let me say then that I reward those that serve me well. And you have served me well. See that you remain loyal to me and our kindred." Her voice softened as she looked me over, "and when you are whole again I'll find some way to reward you suitably."

She kissed me lightly on the cheek before leaving with her stone-faced guard, drawing the hood up and winking at me once before the pair left.

I got the vague impression of feeling like a groundhog being chased by a cougar just then and wondered, not for the last time, if I was getting in over my head. I had been right about her identity though. Seeing the platinum circlet I had made the connection after our first meeting. It could only have been Kasithinir, or Prowldeclines, the legendary circlet of the dwarven kings. It was one of the most valuable single items in our kingdom, possibly the world. Only the reigning monarch had the jurisdiction to wear it, which meant that she had inherited the title, presumably, from her father.

I would have to find out more about her, and I would have to be very discreet about it. But first I would have to recover and get out of bed. Summoning someone to the infirmary had the unfortunate disadvantage of half the fortress knowing about it indirectly.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **September 04, 2008, 04:27:02 pm**

Paulus, let me just say that no story I have encountered thus far on these forums (with the possible exception of *A tale of a Sensible Dwarf*) has captivated me quite like yours. My hat's off to you. These new development prove to be quite intriguing, and I anxiously await the next chapter/post.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 04, 2008, 05:22:18 pm**

((Thanks for the comments Fre. I appreciate your remarks. I love finding little tidbits that I'd missed before. For example: Getting a title is really cool but some of the names are so freakishly long I can't see them unless I take a save, abandon the fort and go into legends to look at them. So, I try to base things off of actual game content. I'll admit when I introduced the King Queen I was intending her to be a little more... good. Based on her provided interests it didn't work out that way. Go figure. I love that the game is so very in depth that the characters have a very good persona already developed.

Anyways, I do appreciate your comments, forgive my ramblings. I'll continue with the postings. Oh, and for all of you with dwarves, feel free to request whatever you would like that's in-character for your dwarves. I'll try to incorporate it if I can. Pretty much all of your dwarves have earned the priveledge of making 'special' requests at this point.

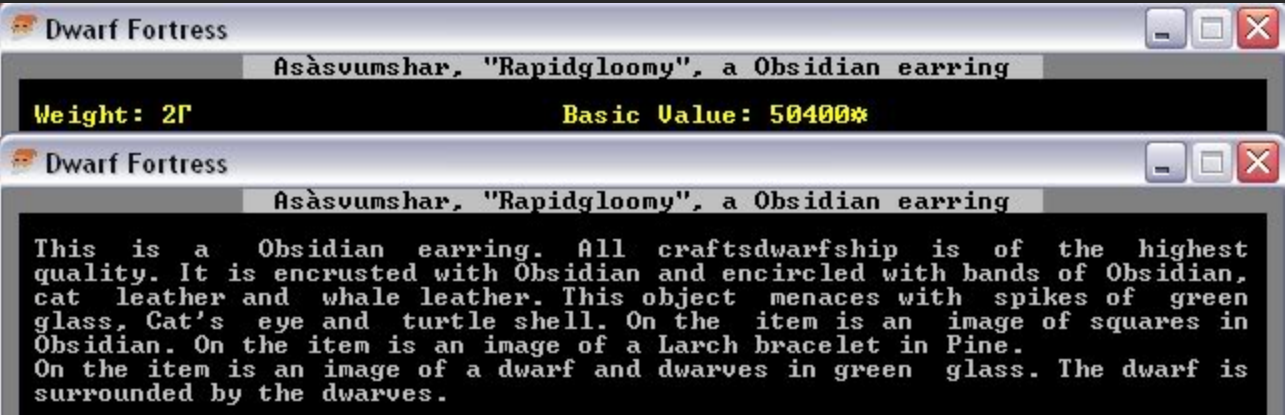
Oh, and my hat (if I had one that hadn't been nicked by my little kobold-in-training daughter) is off to you Toady for making such an awesome game.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 04, 2008, 09:46:26 pm**

20th of Galena

One of our stonecrafters abandoned his work today helping the clean-up crew outside to go and claim a craftdwarf workshop. It seems he made a very nice pair of obsidian earrings, though the name does leave something to be desired. I considered asking him in to see whether it was because he'd spent the last month cleaning up goblin corpses from the siege or whether it was because the Queen and entourage had arrived. I decided not to. It was better not knowing some things.



I've also learned some interesting tidbits from the military that have been sparring around here. Apparently Aardvark, Kuli and Zuglar have been named the heroes (heroine in Zuglar's case) of the siege of 1060. Aardvark has received the title of Gegetegom, making him now Aardvark Tallpaint the Violet Natures. I believe that may be due to the coloration of his armor after the siege, the normal slightly bluish tint had taken on a violet lustre with the addition of fresh goblin blood. Apparently he personally obtained sixteen kills in the last siege, bringing his total up to twenty one goblins. Zuglar on the other hand had a slightly more unusual title, Lecadgan Ezar, or Zuglar Gemclasps the Clean Dish of Soldiers. Kuli performed admirably I've heard despite being unarmed for part of it and earned the title Vudnisstakud Giken, making his full name now Kuli Dancetreaties the Tenacious Machine of Lightning. A much fiercer sounding name than Dancetreaties, one I am aware that he dislikes due to it's elven-sounding nature. Apparently they were able to take a few prisoners as well, so maybe I can persuade Aardvark and Ragnar to leave me some so that when I am healed I can get back into fighting form should it be necessary. We'll see when the time comes. I am anxious to be out of this bed!

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Flintus10** on **September 05, 2008, 03:44:02 am**

name: Kolok
Proffesion:Full time Axedwarf
Gender: male

gj keep it up

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 05, 2008, 12:03:30 pm**

1st of Limestone

It's remarkable how the first breezes of autumn make me feel so much better. My arm and hand is now fully recovered and my left leg as well. My right leg has been improving also and though it is still tender and unable to bear my weight it no longer wakes me in the night throbbing if I've moved it funny. A warmish breeze even managed to make itself felt when someone left the outer doors open.

There were other issues that have arisen as well that ordinarily would demand my attention. Bembul has been overseeing matters well enough in my absence, but this was something that gave me pause when I heard about it. Apparently Melonius has been absent for some time, but with so many dwarves about wasn't really missed. Someone heard his weak cries during an uncommon quiet period in our statuary and he was spotted below on the frozen river hunting for vermin to eat. I don't know how long he'd been there. Long enough to be starving and dehydrated in any case. One of the miners was assigned to tunnel down to him to retrieve him. Needless to say as soon as he was rescued he headed straight for the food and drink. He was emaciated and looked near death. Bembul met with him later and Melonius claims that he was pushed off the edge of our statuary as he was admiring the waterfall. But he would say no more.

I wonder if with the arrival of the Queen some past grudges may have surfaced and someone tried to have him disposed of. I suppose it is possible. I've heard that Melonius had has pretentions of being noble but no verification of said birthright. I've conjectured that it may be possible he is even related, illegitimately, to the Queen herself, though I've no concrete proof of that. It might explain the recent events though.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Kuli** on **September 05, 2008, 02:32:34 pm**

Quote from: Paulus Fahlstrom on September 04, 2008, 09:46:26 pm

Kuli performed admirably I've heard despite being unarmed for part of it and earned the title Vudnisstakud Giken, making his full name now Kuli Dancetreaties the Tenacious Machine of Lightning. A much fiercer sounding name than Dancetreaties, one I am aware that he dislikes due to it's elven-sounding nature.

Awesome. That's a pretty cool title. By the way, is Kuli in white because he's a wrestler, or a champion?

Still following this story and enjoying it.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 05, 2008, 03:19:50 pm**

14th of Limestone

I heard the shouts of alarm from the upper slopes but they were rapidly called off. Apparently two thieves had been spotted up there by the clean-up crew but they ran off before they could be caught and killed. Unfortunately not long after a third was spotted just outside the doors to my building by Sodel, one of our butchers. He managed to catch the creature and throttle it, but not before the kobold had plunged it's weapon into Sodel's head, putting out an eye. For butchers depth perception can be pretty important, or so I would imagine, so I fear we'll be calling Sodel, three-fingered Sodel before too long. I can only hope any missing digits are not found in the stew later.

On the bright side, hours after the kobold incident, the dwarven caravan showed up. Maybe the little buggers were wanting to get a jump on the goods.

((Kuli's in white because he's a wrestler. Actually his wrestling and spearwork are about at the same level, but because you lost your weapon during the siege and wrestled three or four goblins to death you achieved your next rank of wrestling first. I wish you were a champion, but because you and Ragnar both have nervous system wounds, albeit light ones, you do not engage in sparring. Ever. Which makes it very difficult to achieve the rank of Champion. Don't worry. You'll get there eventually... or die in glorious combat trying. ;)))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 06, 2008, 11:43:17 am**

16th of Sandstone

Nish, our prolific guard gave birth to a girl today. For the life of me I don't know what she was thinking, sparring in the room next door in her condition.

Bembul also came to visit me today to inform me that the merchants had brought what we requested. We'd asked for a large stock of gemstones and they certainly brought one. The King consort himself was in the trade depot admiring the selection. In fact, according to Bembul, half the fort volunteered to help take them to the proper storage bins in the special workshop area. I'm not sure they'll all fit from what Bembul mentioned. He even brought me a black diamond to show me. It truly was a thing of beauty. Now we'll have to find suitable things to do with them. Perhaps I'll let Melonius get some practice at his other skill now.

In any case, things are going well. My leg still won't support my weight fully, though it's better than last time and I have my other leg I can use.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 08, 2008, 11:51:51 am**

28th of Timber

Bembul came in to visit me again today, wringing his hands as he came. He's anxious to make sure that the Queen and King Consort are situated well in their rooms, and he's the one now that has to listen to them when they complain that it's not up to snuff yet. The Queen insisted on five cabinets in their rooms, and as we had none of any quality, Bembul had put five in there as a temporary measure while he had others made that were better. Only one of the obsidian cabinets was truly masterful, and though the silver ones were not as good, they were prettier and would likely please the royalty more. Of course, they were still in the special crafts shop having the final touches and decorations added to them.

Bembul told me that the pair of platinum statues of the Queen and King were finally finished, that they looked magnificent. Our gemsetters had done a good job covering up minor flaws in the metalwork itself and the result was two very aesthetically pleasing statues. Worth nearly ten thousand ingot each. Lord Rovod had done all the metalsmithing and done a fine job of it, but Bembul was still concerned that they wouldn't be liked, or up to snuff. I assured him they'd be fine. And if more was needed for the Queen's chambers then it could be taken care of later. The cabinets for example would still take some time, but since every other piece of furniture in there, with the exception of the silver statues of our champions which were fitted with steel armor to resemble actual guards at attention, was liberally bedecked with jewels there was little else that could be done.

I particularly appreciated those silver statues. They'd been originally commissioned for the statuary near the waterfall, but had been removed the the royal chambers out of necessity. New ones would be made eventually for the statuary and Lord Rovod would, I'm sure, be happy to make them. He was legendary at the smelter, knowing the temperature and readiness of the metal just from the color it had, but his metalwork wasn't quite as good and he relished every opportunity to practice more.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 09, 2008, 06:58:50 pm**

The more I talk with Led about things the more I'm convinced he's destined for a very interesting future, should he recover fully and should he not get himself killed in the process that is. Looking back through my journal I realised that he is the creator of Desistirdug Virnanges the turtle shell mini-forge. Over time that single artifact has had more influence and mention in our engravings and other artifacts than any other. In part I suspect because he devoted it to Avuz, the proclaimed goddess of our clan and patron of Dorenemal. I feel that it should receive one of the high places of honor in the new temple dedicated to her, once it is finished that is.

Led on the other hand seems to have become strangely attached to bonecarving now, having made a good portion of the bolts used for practice as well as a goodly number of other goods, such as totems. I thought it funny at first that the totems simply used the skull of a creature, but the kobold and goblin totems were very popular with traders, as well as the wolf totems. Though Led was originally a hunter by trade he now calls himself the 'Hunter of bones', as if it were an official title. He's got some interesting ideas, to be certain, and he's very talented in addition to being fanatically loyal to the clan, so I'm willing to indulge some new ideas on his behalf. I only hope he hasn't lost the use of his arms due to the hammering. I suppose the fact that he survived five hammer-strikes at all is a good sign that he'll eventually recover.

The construction projects go well by all accounts, though, in all honesty, I long to be up and walking again. I've lain too long in bed and fear I'll go crazy if I am not able to do something soon. It's been over a year since I was hammered, though admittedly I feel much better than a year ago. Still, I suppose I must be patient with these things as well. Mountains did not form in a day.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 11, 2008, 11:49:51 am**

22nd of Moonstone

Apparently Urvad herself has found a solution for my boredom. She visited me today to make a request. Apparently her youngest, little Paulus, has finally grown up to be a child and rather than letting him run around completely scott-free and pick his own work she asked me to 'tutor' him as it were. She'd discussed it with a few of the other mothers around here who had children that wanted to learn and so now I periodically hold meetings with just over half a dozen kids. It should certainly be interesting.

Right off the bat one of them asked me if I would be teaching them anything about fighting goblins. I suspected that that was one of Nish's children, they bear a strong resemblance to their father. Since I didn't have a well thought out lesson plan yet I simply told them what I expected of them, which involved them thinking about the questions I asked and being observant of things around them. Their first assignment was to see thing from someone or something else's perspective. We'll see what happens when I meet with them next. I should be ready for them by then. May Kashez the Velvety incence have mercy on me.

6th of Opal

Lokum, one of our woodburners gave birth to a boy today.

The anklebiters have also returned as requested. It was certainly an interesting discussion.

"All right, I hope you've all thought about the choice of perspective."

One of them raised a hand, a somewhat burly lad in the back.

"What good is this? I mean, honestly, it's not like this stuff is that useful. Teach us about warfare or tactics or engineering stuff. Teach us how to fight goblins!"

"Let me put it this way then, this is the first lesson because it's the most important. This will help you fight goblins and whatever else you may encounter." Several of them perked up at this mention. "I'll tell you why. Better yet, I'll show you. You asked the question. I want you to stand directly in front of me. You there, lass, stand to my side."

I held up a hand with three fingers in front of me, and my other hand with four fingers behind me. Turning to the lad who'd asked the question and now stood at the foot of my bed I asked:

"So, how many fingers and I holding up."

He looked at me like it was a trick question. "Three of course."

I asked the same question to the lass to my side to which she responded, "Seven."

"Now, this lesson is all about perspective. You could only see three fingers from where you stood, while she could see seven. What if that had been a goblin ambush? What if you only saw three from where you were approaching but in reality there were seven? Would that change any decisions you made?"

Several murmurs of agreement.

"But there is more to it than that. It's not necessarily what direction you look at problems but how you look at them. Seeing things from different perspectives is very useful, but keep in mind that more often than not we're not seeing the whole picture. There are details that we cannot see because they're hidden from us. But a lot of the times we can infer, or guess, things based on observations.

In addition, there are lessons that can be learned from all around us. You can learn a lot of things by paying attention. For example, look at the floor here in this room and compare it to the floor in the hallway. Go on, take a look and tell me what you see."

Some dropped to the floor to examine it, while a few went directly to the hallway.

"It's obsidian in both places." one called out.

"And it's been smoothed." mentioned another.

I smiled. "True, but try to notice the differences instead of the similarities now."

The young Paulus, who had been relatively quiet up till now, commented: "There seems to be a difference in the slight marks made when it was smoothed though. The room has smaller marks than the hallway."

"Good observation. Why might that be the case?"

He paused for a moment to consider. "Because the tools used were different sizes. These are tooling marks from stone chisels, the chisels used in the halls were broader than those used in this room."

"Precisely. You there... what's your name?"

"Cog, sir."

"I've seen you with some of the stoneworkers up on the wall before have I not?"

"Yes, sir."

"Tell me then, is there variation in the size of the tools that the stoneworkers use?"

He thought about it for a second but then shook his head, hesitantly. "Not that I know of."

"Right, our tools are made essentially to a standard size across our kingdom. This ensures similarities in measurements and such. The reason that this room has different size tooling marks is that it was not made by dwarves. It was smoothed by goblins."

Many of them looked uneasy at the mention of this being a goblin-made room.

"Now, I want you to do the assignment over again. Try looking at things from a different perspective. Specifically I want you to pick a farmer, any farmer, and try to see fortress life from their perspective. Then I want you to try to see things from our Mayor's perspective. Thirdly, pick anything you want and look at it from that person or thing's perspective and be prepared to tell me what you've observed when we meet next."

The kids were chatting animatedly about things they had seen when they entered my room and I let them, listening to what they were saying with their lips as well as with their features. I wasn't the only silent one. Young Paulus and one of Nish's children was also silent, taking the time to observe rather than talk. I made a note of that before we began.

The children had many observations. A farmer was much more concerned with the seasons and weather outside, about the quality of soil, about the potential for diseases entering his crop. A few of the children noted that farmers felt that their professions was different than almost all others in the fortress. Perhaps because of it they tended to be a tight-knit group, supporting each other and knowing about each others lives.

Bembul was almost another extreme. He had been so busy that few of the children had been able to meet with him and talk, and he'd shooed them off several times in order to have meetings.

When I asked the children which of the two professions was more important most of the children blurted out their answers almost immeadiately.

"Bembul."
"Farming."
"Farming."
"Mayor."

I chuckled, despite it all. Turning to Nish's child, the one that had observed before the lesson began, I asked what she thought of it, considering the class couldn't come to a consensus.

She thought a bit before answering but was very correct in her assessment.

"Neither is more important. Both are very important though. Being Mayor is perhaps more stressful as he has to make decisions that affect many, but without the farmers the fortress could not thrive as it does either."

"Well said. All of you look at your hands. Good, now look at your feet. If you were to choose which of them were more important could you? If you were to lose either your hands or your feet could you decide? The answer isn't so simple since for you to be a productive member of the clan you need both reasonably intact.

Now, on to the last bit. I heard you all discussing what else you chose to observe and there were some interesting choices. I hope you've learned from them things that will be useful to you. I'm curious to hear what you chose, Paulus."

He hesitated a little before speaking out.

"I went up the tower and observed a sparrow flying to try and see things from it's point of view."

Several of the children snickered. Birds were generally considered somewhat undwarven and typically seen as more of an annoyance of being aboveground.

"Now be quiet. Let's hear him out. What was interesting about them?"

He started again, somewhat abashed.

"Well, they know the weather and wind currents that drift about the cliffs better than anything I've seen. They know what the weather is going to be like, since before a storm they tend to head for cover. They have complete freedom of motion and can go where they please."

One of the bigger children was still chuckling and making fun to another child.

"What's so funny?" I demanded of him.

He looked a little guilty but spoke out irregardless.

"Well, sir. I don't know how much good that would be. We don't have anything to do with the birds, and little more with where they tend to be."

"You then are fool to thing the observations are useless." I was beginning to get annoyed. "Because we live in a relatively peaceful area of the mountains and have for some time you think you know what the rest of the world is like. We have high walls that protect us from our foes now, and steel to keep our soldiers safe, and you think that enough. Imagine if you would then what life would be like if things were different. Imagine what it would be like if kobolds had wings and could fly."

Several of the children smiled at this but as they thought about it they smiled less. Some of them ventured ideas.

"We'd have a lot more stuff knicked that's for sure."

That sentence of a child's seemed to receive general acceptance.

I agreed. "Aye, and what then? Our walls would do no good. They could steal with near impunity since, though we have one entrance through our front gates, we have at least a dozen other ways in to those that could fly. We'd have to post guards at all those locations, and keep them rotated and fresh. I guarantee you that the kobolds wouldn't be happy to steal from us for long. They'd send archers after that. What would we do then? Creatures that could fly over our walls and rain down arrows upon us from above, that could shoot down from higher than our own crossbows could reach?

Kobolds are just an example. None of use here has ever seen a dragon either, but they exist. What if a dragon came? What good would our walls do then, when a dragon landed on our roof and came down the central stair? Paulus makes a good observation. It isn't necessarily enough to be well defended from the ground if a bird can come and go as they please. Still, I hope that you learn from this and consider all knowledge as being beneficial. The key is knowing how to use it."

The children were silent as they left. I'd given them much to think about.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **September 19, 2008, 08:55:55 pm**

Glad to see you back and posting. Still enjoying the story. Keep it up!

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **September 21, 2008, 06:37:40 am**

It was great to come back after a busy summer and read about Dorenemal. The story seems to be going great, and it is even more interesting for each new post that comes. Your writing skills have increased and the storyline with our queen has me asking questions about what the Dwarven royalty has planned for us.

I would like to see Aardvarks profile and inventory. I also want to know what quality rating his armour has, and if there isn't dug out a great mausoleum for the champions of our hold it should be created. A mausoleum garden with silver (he likes silver) statues for every champion in front of their coffin, the statues are modeled after them. Remember that I do not know if there already are something like it.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 25, 2008, 05:58:17 pm**

I was speaking with Bembul when another dwarf interrupted us. It didn't bother me much, it was always nice to have visitors, though he seemed a little hesitant at first he quickly confided the reason for his visit. Giving me a deep nod he began:

"Hoy, Paulus, Bembul. My apologies fer interruptin'. Just to let you know sir, " addressing Bembul, " the south upper slopes have been cleared of decent trees and we're most of the way through the north one as well."

Turning to me he also had a question. "I've been wonderin', see, when I came here I was a nobody. I spent my time like many helpin' ta build our walls and now with an axe providing us lumber. I find I likes the axe and since it'll be a number of years before the trees are regrown I'd like to join the military and practice my axework a bit more. I promise I'll be an able defender."

I looked at him, he had seen his fair share of weathering, that was to be sure, the tanned skin and lined face betraying the time spent in

the sun and storm. I looked to Bembul who gave a non-committal shrug, indicating that he had no preference. Nodding I replied:

"Well, it looks like you've drafted yourself then. Go see Aardvark for your gear and tell him I sent you to join his forces."

It was then that we noticed the heavy clank of tread coming down the hall.

"Tell me what?"

Aardvark himself walked in, nodding at Bembul and myself before sizing the new recruit up.

"Nice to see you Aardvark. Kolok here wanted to join the military as an axedwarf. Ye got armor for him?"

"Aye, we should. You, Kolok, head over to the barracks and see what we've got in stock. Mind you double up with chainmail too."

Kolok bowed deeply to all of us and headed over, a small grin spread across his face as he left.

"And what can I do for you Aardvark?"

"Get better so we can get this place in proper shape again if you don't mind. No offence Bembul. I've been thinking though and it's high time we arranged for a proper location for our dead. Specifically our military heroes."

"Sounds reasonable. What do you have in mind?"

"I'd like to see a grand mausoleum. Obsidian coffins inlaid with silver or something and a silver statue in the likeness of any who pass on."

I grinned. I was aware that he was fond of silver. He certainly would have no shortage of it here. Despite the road being made of silver we still had a large amount of it.

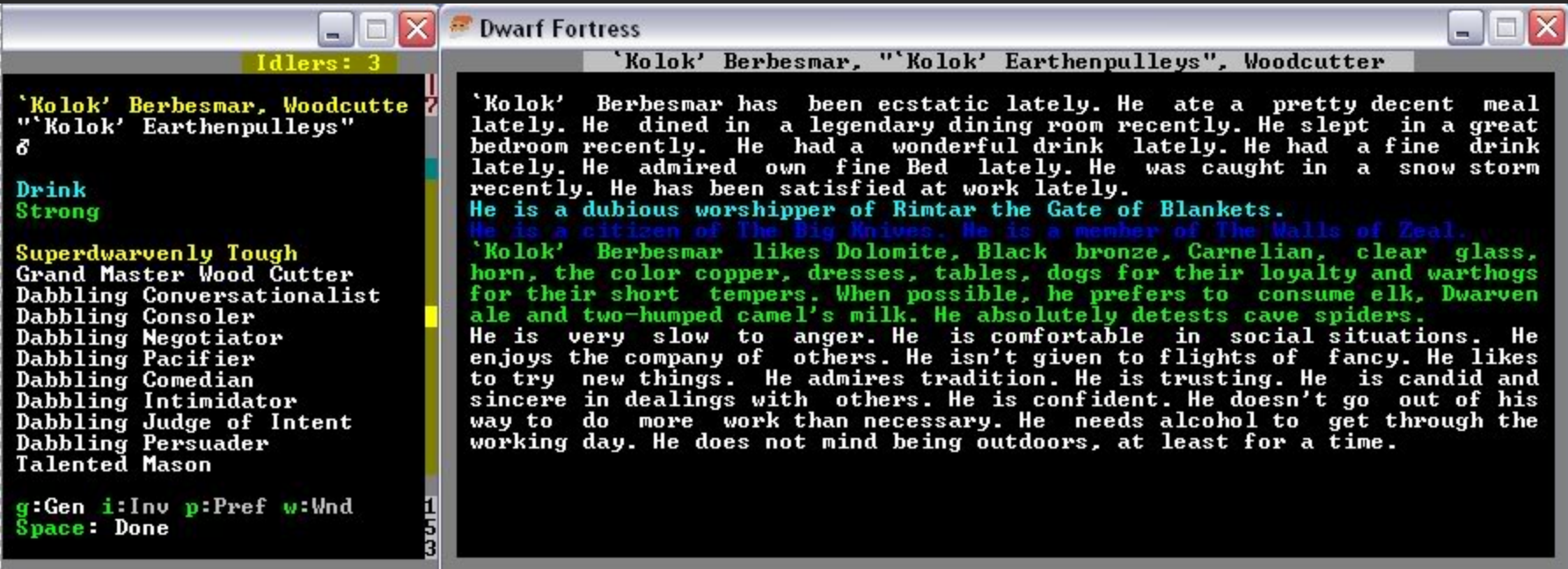
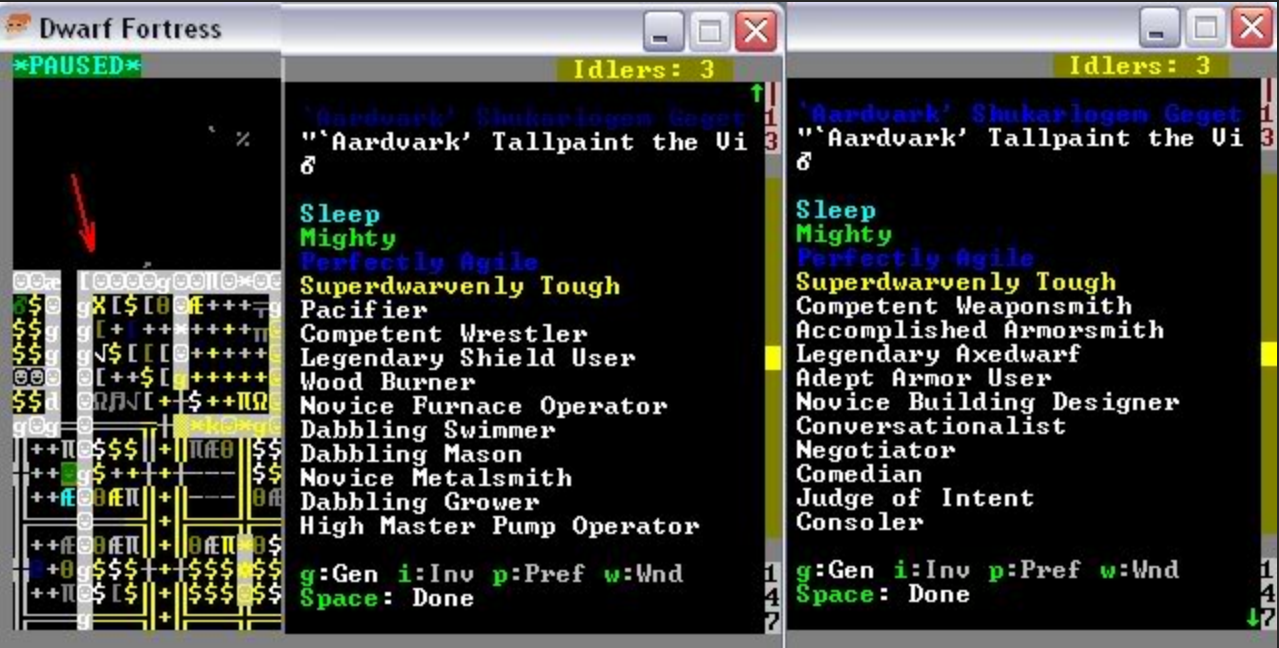
"I'm sure we can manage that. I think the lowest floor or two would be a suitable location for it. I'll put it on the list of projects right away."

"Good. See you two around."

As he walked out I noticed that rather than carrying a steel shield he was using a beat up and rather dented goblin one made of iron. I'd have to ask him about that some other time. Perhaps he didn't want to ding up his good steel ones in practice.

Bembul and I added that to the list of projects he was working on. There certainly were enough of them.

((My apologies for not posting much lately. I was distracted by the Ender challenge and experimenting with version 40d. Now that I've got slaughtering Ender's by the dozens out of my system I'll be back to writing. ;) Oh, and here's some of the requested images. Currently there are no dead champions actually Aardvark, so it simply hasn't been a pressing issue. The few outstanding dwarves we've had that have passed away have received their own mausoleums as needed. But I'll take care of it and post a pic. Oh, and Aardvark, most of your gear is either superior or exceptional steel of your make, except the iron goblin shield which you're using for some reason. Heh. Oh, and apparently all you're wearing is your armor and a tattered rope reed shirt dyed red, to apparently help with the chafing.))



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**

Post by: **Cepheid** on **September 25, 2008, 08:22:27 pm**

Man, the length of this story is heavily misleading. I have my settings set up for 50 posts per page, so it came to 5 pages total. When compared to some of the other interesting stories out there, it seemed relatively.. short in terms of page count.

Truth is, the amount of writing on each page is extensive, making it feel closer to 10 or 11 pages worth of short posts, if not more.

I love the story thus far! Must...keep...reading!

If it is not too much of a burden, can I have a dwarf, please? If so, the details are as follows:

Name: Cepheid

Gender: Male
Profession: Mason/Military

Personality: The silent type, always deep in thought or working at making blocks, tables, and whatever else is needed around the fortress. In his off hours, he prefers to train with various weapons for self-defense.

Edit: Forgot weapon preference. To tell you the truth, just give him whatever you think the fortress needs. If you want specifics, go with a sword.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 26, 2008, 06:59:59 pm**

23rd of Opal

My sister-in-law gave birth to a healthy little girl today. Tarin came to let me know. I admit it's strange seeing him already married, settled and raising kids. He was the youngest of us four and yet he's the first to do so. Perhaps the only one of us all to have the chance. Only time will tell on that count.

((I'll start looking for someone appropriate Cepheid. There's no shortage of masons to be sure.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **DarkMagnus** on **September 27, 2008, 07:12:33 pm**

Holy crap, been a while. Damn, I can't believe what a badass Ragnar turned into. 16 kills per siege with a nervous system injury? Lawds.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 30, 2008, 04:20:13 pm**

((
Paulus' wife gives birth to a baby boy!
Paulus cancels Sleep: Seeking infant))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **September 30, 2008, 04:39:40 pm**

Congratulations. ;D

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 30, 2008, 06:58:55 pm**

((Thanks. If only it were as easy in real life as DF makes it seem.
Woman cancels sparring session:
(Woman gives birth to child)
Seeking infant.
(Resumes sparring)
I'll get back to posting once I can catch up on sleep.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **September 30, 2008, 08:08:09 pm**

Indeed. Congratulations! Don't let your wife carry him into battle now, could be detrimental for his health.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **October 01, 2008, 03:05:16 am**

Just a Dorenemal question. Are we importing charcoal? If not, WHY?

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 02, 2008, 10:36:30 pm**

((Yes, we do actually import charcoal. And wood, and Bituminous coal and lignite from the dwarves and wood and charcoal from the humans. Our furnaces should shortly be up and running full steam for a bit again here.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 07, 2008, 04:32:37 pm**

28th of Opal

Our illustrious Queen gave birth to a girl today. News of it was proclaimed through the fortress by the Royal guard. I also caught several a few of the soldiers making cracks about it. The king consort had come through the area with a bag full of gemstones to take to the special workshop and the pair had interrupted their sparring to joke about it. Well after he had gone. I called one of them over later and asked discreetly about it. It seems the king consort is somewhat of a joke among those in the know. The Queen and he were married to cement a political alliance and both supposedly gained much in the deal. He gained a considerable amount of wealth and influence, and she gained power and the support of one of the larger dwarven clan in the tribe, which in turn allowed her to cement her position as successor to her father.

Rumor also has it that there is little love lost between the pair, and that the Queen regularly takes lovers into her special bedchambers. According to the rumors none of their children are his, though that somewhat stretches the imagination. Still, another child is another child, and we can only hope that here she'll learn other more useful skills than the joining of politics and bad bedside behavior.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 08, 2008, 06:25:11 pm**

It's a new year again, though I was forced to celebrate it with only Led. He's not bad, but, like I said last time, has some strange ideas. Still, a stout enough dwarf and one that's been through thick and thin with the clan. He's one of the few hunters we have, and the longest lasting by far. Regrettably it's a short-lived profession.

Still, I write this because I overheard that Udil, one of our furnace operators, gave birth to a boy early this morning.

I don't know what it is. It must just be that time of year, but babies are popping up left and right. I myself had a dream I was married and had a son born to me. It was a very very strange dream, since I was human and married to Abba. Not an unpleasant dream, especially with her in it, but still strange. The kid looked very cute though, at least I thought so when I was a human, but as you can quickly imagine dreams can blur perception and this one was one of those.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 09, 2008, 06:50:20 pm**

12th of Granite

The elves have returned. I don't think anyone was particularly excited to see them and with the goods their merchants brought they'll certainly make no friends here. Clothing that is too large for us. Wooden weapons. Lots and lots of cloth, which we have plenty of. And a box of prickle berries.

Bembul told me about the whole amusing scenario when he brought me some water.

Apparently the diplomat arrived first and spoke with Queen Zuglar. I'm not sure things went well, but she, nonetheless, agreed to limit our cutting of trees as the two veteran diplomats exchanged barbs with each other. Zuglar informed Bembul that he should trade for the berries, the only item we could use, but only gave him one item to trade with. A masterwork Donkey skull totem. He got the berries, much to our mutual surprise. The elves accepted the totem in exchange.

Personally, I suspect that the elves were annoyed at us for not agreeing to limit our ~~tree-cutting~~ deforestation this past year, and for this didn't bring hardly anything to trade. Not that it makes that much of a difference for us. Still, relations between our races, though not always cordial, remain at least reasonably friendly. No one is fond of the goblins.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 10, 2008, 07:01:29 pm**

15th of Granite

Things were as busy as normal around the fortress, and few of the sturdy dwarves even bothered glancing at the elves waiting patiently in the trade depot with unwanted goods. Children played on the roof in the snow that lay like a blanket over the landscape, despite it being spring-time. These were dwarves of the north, and the alcohol that flowed in their veins warmed them enough for such a mild cold as today.

The chill that suddenly permeated the air when a cry went up was not from the weather, nor the occasional snowballs of the children though. The cry went up from the east and no traders were due, the elves already present. Everyone knew what that meant. A quick hush settled over everyone as they sought family members, trying to reassure themselves that their own loved ones were safe and not out cutting the last stragglers of timber or hauling it in from the south.

Those working outside in the snowstorm heard the call more clearly though, and passed it on. The goblins had come in force again. We were besieged by a vile force bent on our destruction. Ordinarily the gates would have crashed down, allowing all time to get to safety, but such could not occur with civilians out in the snow. Urvad and her squad of champions, as well as Fath responded quickly, leaving the comfort of the frozen falls and statuary for the heat and chaos of battle above. For the civilians they would arrive in time. For the woodcutters it was another matter.

The three woodcutters assigned to bring in the last of the trees were Kolok, Oddom and Kogan, all stout and skilled in their trade. But at the sight of more than a dozen goblins approaching from the east out of the white swirling masses hesitation struck. They could run for the ramp, possibly arriving before the goblins, but it was uncertain, and only Kogan was close enough to clearly make it. The three sprinted towards the south-eastern building, skirting along the banks where the snow was lighter since the wind whipped it over the top from the west. A group of goblins broke away from the pack, heading straight for the three and they knew they'd have to make a stand and hope they had time. Kolok, shouted at the others above the howling winds:

"Ach, it's no use mates. We'll be pinned against the walls if we go on. Let's make a stand here and fight and die like dwarves if need be."

Oddom hefted his axe and merely nodded, settling into a crouch north of Kolok, who stood out in the open daring the four goblins to approach. Kogan, to the dismay of the others broke for shelter and only gained the safety of the ramp at the cost to the others. The goblins had spotted them and began advancing, a wrestler in the lead flanked by a trio of speargoblins.

The wrestler made a feint towards Kolok before launching himself bodily into the dwarf, the pair landing softly in the snow next to the black walls. Throwing the goblin off Kolok stood again facing off with the wrestler, and feigning an attack as Oddom came in from behind, unheard, to cleave into the foolish goblin. His fate was sealed by the time his three companions arrived to help, one tackling Oddom while the other two engaged Kolok. The pair circled around the seemingly helpless dwarf until one of the goblins lost it's footing only slightly. Kolok was on it in a flash, tearing a chunk out of it's leg with his axe, and severing a hand on the return strike. Oddom wasn't faring quite as well, but was holding his own when he saw the killing blow land on the goblin at the same time as a spear pierced through the arm of his fellow woodcutter. Summoning pent up fury the dwarf drove the goblin back and off of him, dealing shocking blows even as Kolok too gave as he had received. In seconds the goblins lay dead and dismembered at their feet, but Kolok was badly wounded and they stood no chance against the twelve others that advanced, considerably slower upon them from the east. There was no choice then, they would flee for safety and hope and trust in the defenders of Dorenemal to catch them before the goblins did. And so began the deadly game anew, no gates had been raised to impede the goblins this time and fleeing dwarves were to be seen. A change seemed to be in the wind for them and it was pleasant.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 13, 2008, 01:58:35 pm**

As the two woodcutters crested the ramp their hearts dropped within them briefly, before spurring them on to greater speeds. A second group of goblins had begun pouring through the upper gate to the east and was nearly upon them as well. They cleared the ramp to the gate mere feet in front of the first of the creatures who were howling after their blood and running after them. Kolok was the first to clear the corner of the building and for a second his heart leaped within him. About a dozen dwarves were coming towards him from where he was running. Another second later a heavy dread filled both him and Oddom who now saw what he did. Their kin, unarmed, unarmored and untrained had begun pouring from the gates to see the spectacles of battle, not knowing that the soldiers of Dorenemal had yet to issue forth.

Oddom growled a curse before spitting and turning to Kolok as they ran.

"Bloody civilians. Yer in no shape to fight, get yerself in and take them blasted peasants with ye. I'll hold here 'til the guard shows."

There was little Kolok could do about the situation. Blood poured freely down his arm leaving a trail of red droplets in the snow, which steamed for a few seconds after he passed. The others walking towards them with gaiety didn't understand the situation until the first of the goblins rounded the corner, causing mass consternation and panic.

"Ah... goblins!" was the cry, as those in the front saw the danger and panicked, trying with little success to press against those coming from behind who could not see the danger. It nearly escalated to a mass-panic but Urvad's clear voice cut through the confusion like a sword.

"Make way for the fighters or be struck down where ye stand!"

Sazir from her patrol was well ahead of her, as was Mafol from Fath's squad and the pair slipped deftly through the throng, while Urvad did her best to take charge of the situation. The other commanders were below, asleep or in meetings which left her as the ranking dwarf. She called back to another from her squad calling for Kuli and his to get up here and cover the west ramp should they be attacked from there as well, before plowing into the thick of the pressing masses.

Oddom was surrounded by three of the goblins already by the time Sazir and Mafol reached him. But the fighting broke out then in earnest, as the rest of the goblins rounded the corner to greet them.

The silver street of Dorenemal ran red again that day. Sazir and Mafol clove into their enemies with abandon, carving their way to Oddom's side and pressing on into the enemy. In minutes the goblin patrol had broken, fleeing to the east from whence they came, the pair in hot pursuit of stragglers. Many of the civilians had stayed to watch the battle, and to clean up afterwards, but again, their presumption of beginning before the end of the siege was ill-favored.

The patrol that Kolok and Oddom had initially encountered had finally gained the heights of the middle cliff, having confirmed the death of their squadmates. Anger simmered in their eyes as they saw a knot of dwarves, unarmed, cleaning up after the carnage of the small battle. Orders were barked in their guttural toungue and the goblins pressed forward, eagerly. A child spotted them approaching first and called out in alarm. Soon consternation reigned again among the civilians. Their soldiers were still in pursuit of the first group, or back at the ramp to the west.

It was either bravery or stubbornness that caused Mafol, the miner and one of the founders to step forward to confront them. At his side out of the crowd stepped Medtob, his lover and the pair, wielding their steel picks faced down the dozen goblins threatening their kin.

The goblins approached, howling and shouting curses, in contrast to the dwarves who stood silent and immovable in the swirling snow. A quick squeeze of each other's hands was all that passed between the lovers as they faced the murderous goblins.

As the goblins came within striking distance the dwarves exploded into action, smashing out left and right with the sharpened picks. The goblins, for their part, exploded in gore and blood, lungs punctured, skulls pierced, limbs rendered useless, their splintered bones causing agony. What were a mere dozen goblins to the pair of hardened miners? They'd carved stone down to the bones of the mountains, as deep as reasonably possible while still having clean air to breathe. They'd hauled tons of rock, and carved much much more than that. A small little goblin weighed nothing to them, even impaled upon their picks. Mafol slaughtered four before they even thought to run. Medtob managed three, and then even when the goblins fled in terror they each ran down another planting their picks into the earth through the backs of the goblins as they ran.

The siege ended not long after. Kuli's squad decimated a third goblin platoon on the west, catching the frontrunners in the traps before chasing the others down. A few got away. Most died within feet of the gate.

The heroes of the siege were feted that evening. Kolok, who had slain two. Oddom who had slain two as well, but died in defense of his home and would be interred in honor. Mafol of Fath's squad, now known as Mafol Isanlitast Tosidarzes Tustem or Mafol Stilltorch the Armored Knight of Courtesy who slew five. Sazir of Urvad's squad who slew three. Eral, of Fath's squad, now known as Eral Zagodmosus Kirargotom Mishar or Eral Griproom the Righteous Cavity of Deities who slew three. And last but not least the miners Mafol Egastiden now known with Govosgomath Iklist or Mafol Clenchpaddle the Leafy Legend of Whispering for his uncanny silence while fighting, who slew five. And Medtob, his lover, now known as Medtob Daseliden Buketngarak Irid or Medtob Heavenpaddle the Quick Beetle, who slew four.

The siege ended on the 25th of Granite, not long after it began. Oddom, may he rest entombed in stone undisturbed, was the only loss. Kolok, though wounded recovers as I write. Nearly fourty goblins were sent this day to meet their gods, may they take mercy on them for their stupidity in attacking Dorenemal.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 13, 2008, 04:15:24 pm**

20th of Slate

I find it very frustrating that my limbs refuse to heal properly. I have been assured that if I don't remain in bed they'll never set properly and I'd likely be crippled for the rest of my life. I am too young to consider such a course, though some days it seems remarkably tempting to be free of this bed despite the cost. The true punishment for me I think was not in being chained nor beaten, it's having to endure inactivity and watching life fly by while I am unable to keep up with it. I think I understand how the aged feel. Their bodies are no longer able to keep up with the rigors of normal labor or combat, and if they are valued, or were during their lives I can only imagine what a blow it would be to them to be forced into inactivity. To have been skilled and useful and then to have lost it due to weakness and age must be a terrible trial. At least I still have my youth and vigor.

But life does pass by quickly. Too quickly for some. The Dutchess had requested some crystal glass items to be made, and though our miners looked we found no material suitable for them. The merchants brought some but it was already cut and would yield too little material. For this shortage Fath, our peasant turned glassmaker, was sentenced to sixteen hammerstrikes. He survived two. It's a shame that our glassmaking industry seems decimated consistently by these mandates, yet it is our law and I am in no position at the moment to do anything about it.

Fath's death was somewhat balanced by the birth of a girl to Zefon, our brewer. Again. To hear tell there are more children hanging around the brewery than ever, especially when Zefon is working. But she does produce some truly wonderful drink.

((As a note, I've modified the initial entry to conform to a more story-telling perspective. Nothing truly important, but a couple of foreshadow things in there.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Flintus10** on **October 14, 2008, 04:18:27 am**

Hahaha Kolok a hero I like the sound of that :D

Great work with the siege it was a brilliant read

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **dresdor** on **October 14, 2008, 10:12:46 am**

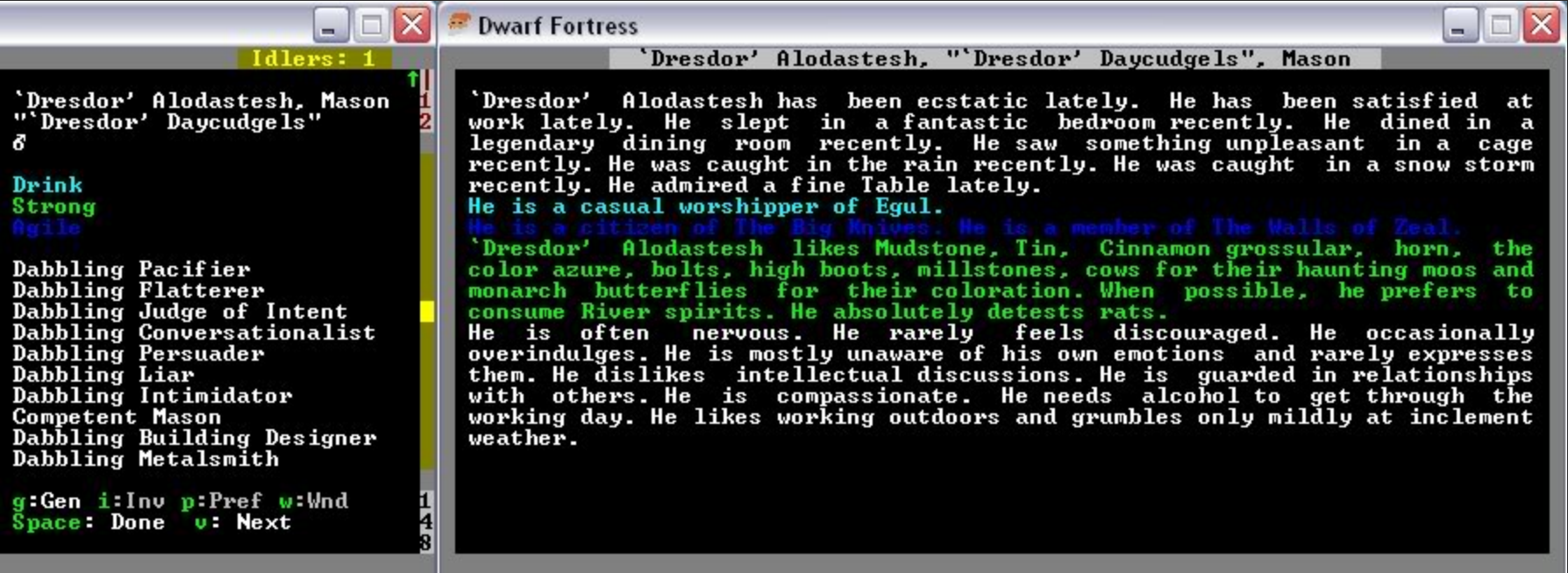
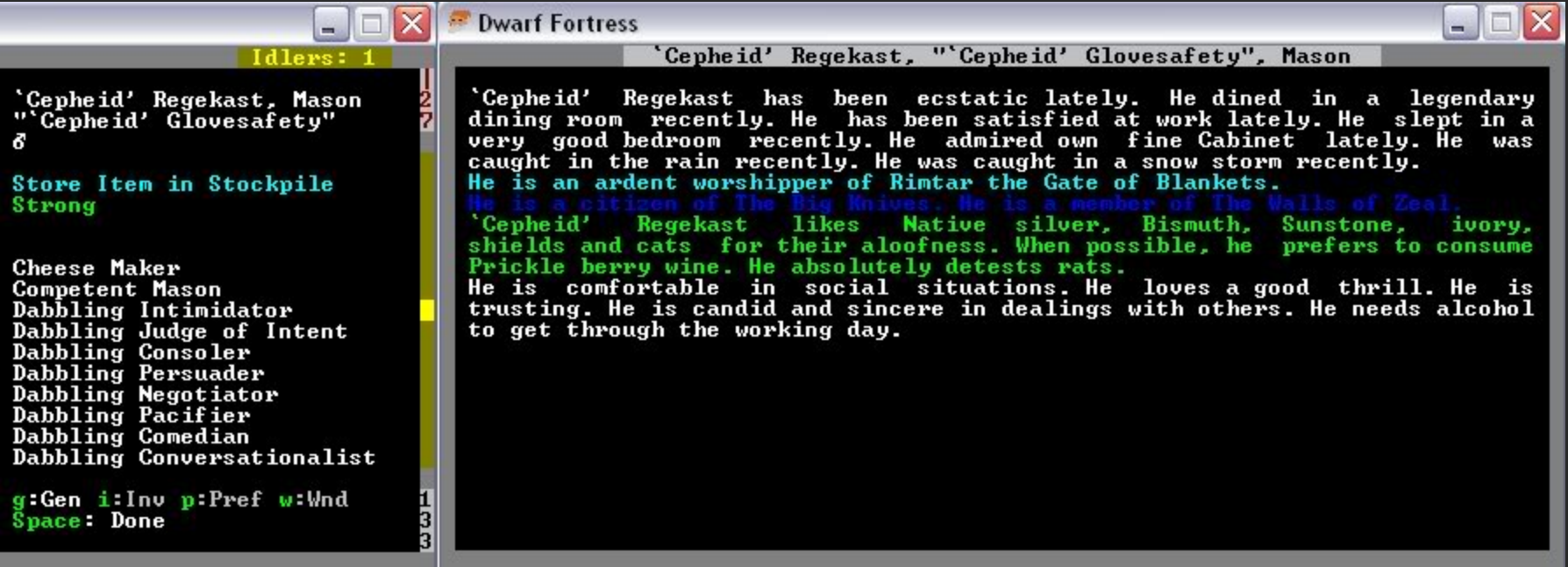
Can I request a dwarf:

Name: Dresdor
Preferred Profession: Mason
Weird qualities: Likes to make statues. And then more statues. And then more statues. Then perhaps decorate those statues with gems. Oh, and then make more statues.

21st of Felsite

Two more children have been born recently. One again to Urvad, who continues to use the slightly dented steel helm as a sling, and the second to a relative newcomer, Aban, a peasant. Urvad's child was a girl, Aban's a boy. This brings the population of children in the fortress to fourty two, a monumental number by all accounts. Nearly a fifth of our total population, actually. My classes have swelled in size as well, a dozen now come on any given day as we discuss topics ranging from mineral types to the laws of supply and demand and the devaluation of goods in a trading economy. Not surprisingly my lectures on military tactics and logistics are generally very well attended. I've got a surprise coming up for them though. One of our masons, who happens to be a glassmaker by trade as well, took a break from making statues for the Hall of the Dead to work on a special project of mine. It's based loosely on the alcohol stills that are used but with considerable refinements. I also had to have some Sewer Brew purloined by one of the children for use in the project. I'll not mention names in case this is read. In any case, our philosopher has been helping me prepare for my lessons while I am bed-ridden and she's proven a very valuable asset.

((Here's profiles for the two 'new' dwarves. I picked currently 'unremarkable' ones, as I've got a lot of masons who are already legendary or have created artifacts. Still, I hope the choices are appropriate, though don't expect to see too much military action for a while. Masons are always busy in Dorenemal.))



11th of Hematite

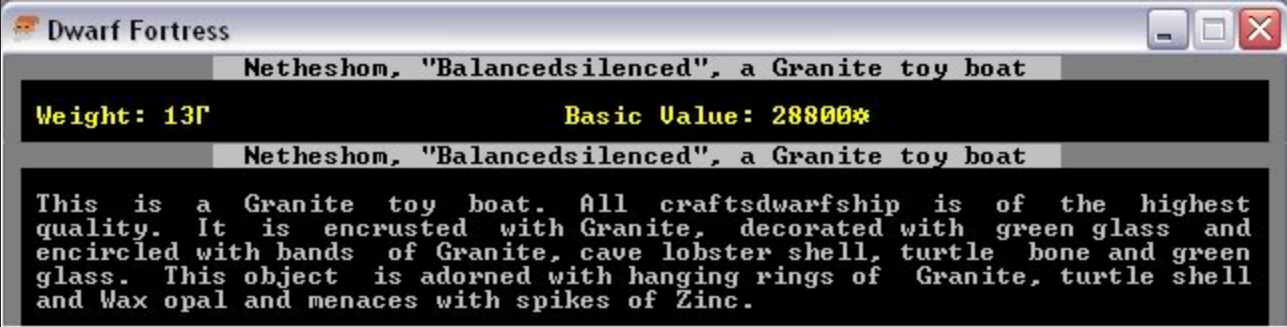
I'm told the human merchants have arrived again. I heard the wagons rumbling outside the building and could have assumed as much myself. Bembul seemed extraordinarily pleased though when he came to visit a few days after they'd come. I soon learned why. He'd been re-elected as Mayor, primarily. Though with the excellent job he's done I must admit I'm not too surprised. He's really done a stellar job of organizing everything, considering he's the fortress manager and broker as well. Things have been running reasonably smoothly.

Apparently the goods the humans brought also brought considerable joy. A vast amount of wood, wagons and wagons of it, or so I hear. As well as an ample amount of seafood and some other assorted goods. The furnaces will get to run another season or two by the looks of things, and we'll get a nice little stockpile of coal. Of course, we've been burning through it rather quickly, literally, as we smelt the metal out of the raw ores which have been mined. It'd be done eventually, and it's easier to stockpile the bars of metal than it is to keep all that ore lying around. According to Litast's last count we have roughly two hundred and fifty bars of silver. A vast amount considering how much we've already used on the road, statues, coinage and other projects. It should be more than sufficient to see to Aardvark's request. I'd ask Bembul to get work going on that, but to be honest, he's got enough on his plate already.

Oh, and clean-up from the siege has been completed. Part of the lower wall was removed to facilitate this, which showed remarkable initiative and thought into the logistics of the thing. I'll have to figure out who thought of it and compliment them.

23rd of Hematite

I'm told that one of our engravers was apparently possessed by the spirit of his great uncle who died as a youth of five years. He had no skill in crafting but nonetheless produced a marvel to behold. He calls it Netheshom, or Balancedsilenced. It's a Granite toy boat and uncharictaristically he's donated it to all the children in the fortress to play with in turn. From what I hear our well room has become quite the popular place with the children now. Not that it hasn't always been well frequented. I hear the children also like to play on the stairs beneath the waterfalls when we refill our supply every year.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 15, 2008, 05:30:07 pm**

1st of Limestone

Ah to feel the stone beneath my feet again and have a barrel of dwarven ale next to me again. It has been so long that I've lost count of the days, but I think it's been nearly three years that I've had to spend confined to a bed recovering. But today, this first day of autumn, I've been proclaimed fit enough. My leg still pains me a little, and the wounds have still not healed over fully, but I can use it and stand on my own two feet.

Finally.

Admittedly they were rather shaky two feet, and I fear I've atrophied some while in bed. Not to mention the bed sores that cover most of my backside where I lay. But in comparison, even those are trivial to have regained my freedom. I look like a mere shadow of myself at the moment. But I had business to attend to. A keg was calling my name. That and I'd promised the human diplomat I'd speak with him as soon as possible. He wanted privacy, so I told him to meet me three floors down from my sickroom, behind and beneath the prisons. There was nothing down there. No building, no light, only scattered remains the goblins may have left behind which we've not touched since. That of course will change here soon, but for the time being it was the perfect place.

The diplomat had been waiting the entire time I was in prison and recovering. He insisted he speak with me, and me only. The meeting was relatively quick and painless. Abba had sent him to speak with me. She'd wanted to thank us for what we'd done to help their defensive efforts and she'd sent a letter with him to deliver to me. It contained a map, directions to her hometown and interestingly enough, a geological survey of a site along the coast, far to the south. She claimed she had things she wanted to discuss with me, and if it were possible some time in the future to visit, she'd appreciate it. The diplomat also removed a single ring from a chain around his neck, handing it to me. The workmanship was amazing, with intricate carvings and letters both inside and out. It appeared to be metal, but I was not familiar with it, nor did it seem prudent to show it to anyone else. No other information was provided, leaving much of it a mystery to me. After our very brief meeting the diplomat simply left.

The only thing to otherwise dull this rather marvelous day was the loss of one of our guards. Rith. He was apparently killed in a training accident. I'd seen a lot of him, as he and several others were always sparring either in my sick-room our just outside it. It struck me as a shame. But he'd shown promise and it seemed like a waste of life.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 16, 2008, 12:33:08 pm**

11th of Limestone

Today was somewhat uneventful. Since I've been laid up for so long I decided it would be good to help Bembul out. Avuz herself would become forgetful seeing the list of things he has to do. I've taken an electrum table that Bembul had started having fashioned for Lord Rovod. He'd requested something in his dining room and though he'd made the table himself he wasn't aware of what we'd had planned to improve it with. I knew the dungeon master relatively well, and was aware of his likes when it came to metals and jewels. Calling over the necessary help I began hauling the table to the special craftshall. It would be a truly magnificent table. I suspected that Lord Rovod would like it, of course, by the time we were done it would be fit for the Queen herself to dine on. I wasn't going to tell her about it though.

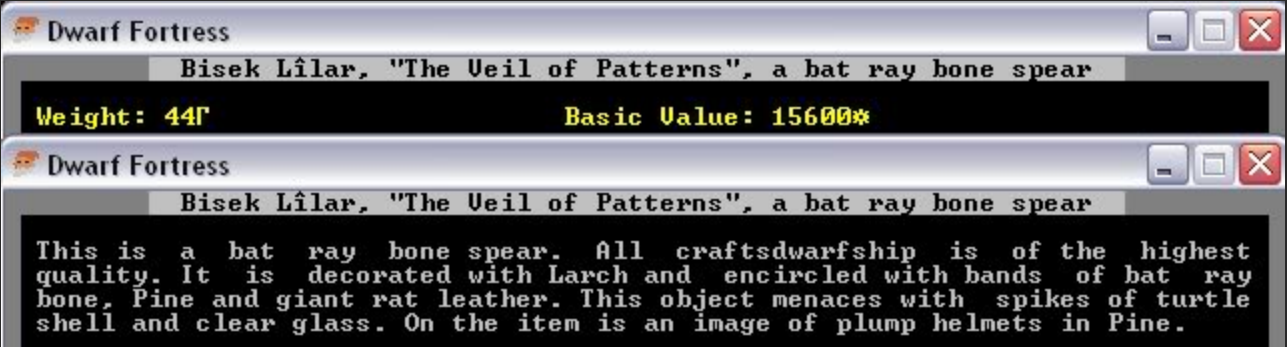
Also, Nish, our prolific guard gave birth to a girl today. There was toasting in the barracks, and a lusty bawling from the infant to go with it. At least until Nish gave her some of the drink. Calmed her right down.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 17, 2008, 12:04:28 pm**

26th of Limestone

One of Urvad's children has, I believe, been speaking with Led and Tholtig a little too much. Not that I necessarily believe it's a bad thing, but they have strange ideas and I fear they've rubbed off. Lor, a worshipper of Avuz, was possessed with a creative spirit that rivalled many and went and claimed the very workshop where Led created the turtle shell mini-forge, beloved artifact and symbol of Avuz here. Lor grabbed a great many items, strangely enough, none of very significant value and created Bisek Lilar, or the Veil of Patterns, a bat ray bone spear. It's very impressive and the child insists that no one use it until he himself is of age and has been trained so he can take it up as a champion of Avuz.

See what I mean about strange ideas? Such creative spirit can rarely be contained or focused, but I think it would have been much better had the child made it out of steel. Of course, that's my practical side speaking there. It's a magnificent piece in any case.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 20, 2008, 01:23:17 pm**

2nd of Timber

My sister-in-law gave birth to another child today. A girl. That makes another niece I have. Sort of. Heh, not having any blood relation but claiming sibling status makes for interesting family ties.

Lord Rovod's table is nearing completion. I still need to get some of his favorite gemstones worked into it. But it looks splendid. Ushat did a marvelous job with the metal inlay and engraving.

I've been slowly working back up to normal activities. I've been very tired lately with my newfound mobility. I feel great though, despite occasional weakness. I've spoken with Aardvark and Ragnar about a little combat practice. Apparently there are three goblins still in cages that we captured that would work to refresh my martial skills. I'll have to be discreet about it though. I don't want a big crowd watching a potentially embarrassing or fatal fight. It's been a while since I've picked up a weapon, much less donned armor. But I feel it's important for me to regain my peak conditioning. I fear there will be many challenges ahead of us still. I've heard rumors that Agna has been asking questions about things. Particularly that human diplomat that I met with. I've also been trying to avoid the Queen as much as possible. I somehow feel it's safer that way.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 22, 2008, 06:53:01 pm**

The pair of soldiers entered the southern building, shrugging off the newly fallen snow from their cloaks as they entered. Only a few steps into the building they took the lesser used halls to the east. The westerly halls had been busy lately, as the construction and demolition two floors and above continued undaunted, night and day. The sound of construction, of dwarves hauling stone and blocks would muffle what little sound escaped the gladiatorial pit. Ragnar gave Paulus a firm slap on the back as he took up his post by the mechanism.

"G'luck to ye lad. Not dat you'll need it."

Paulus nodded and walked on into the room where three goblin cages sat against the far wall. Their occupants looked wary. There was little doubt what would happen shortly. It was a common enough practice. Despite some customs, the goblins retained their weapons and all their equipment. Even the archer. A very faint sound of stone grinding on stone could be heard before the carefully rigged cages released their captives. Only a single dwarf stood between them and the freedom of the open door behind him. A single dwarf in platemail with a dangerous looking sword, but still it was one on three.

The archer was the first to try and take advantage of the newfound freedom, having again the space to use his weapon. A single arrow was nocked before the dwarf lunged, covering the distance in less than a heart-beat, sword cleaving through string and flesh and bone. Two more swift cuts left the goblin dismembered on the floor and a quick pivot brought the dwarf face to face with the second goblin who was rushing him. The goblin lifted his hammer to strike but moved too slowly, the swing was batted aside with a flick of the shield before the sword danced in again, finding the goblin's hand and severing it. A second thrust impaled the creature in the chest and a flourish removed it's head, dropping the body onto the floor. The third goblin had hesitated too long and made a break for the door, but was unable to make it past the threshold. Covering the distance in a flash the dwarf had swiped forward and horizontally, catching the goblin in the leg, hamstringing it from behind and dropping it to the floor. It raised it's arms in a futile gesture to ward off the blows that followed.

Only a few seconds had passed from when the cages had opened. But still the dwarf breathed heavily through his helmet. Removing it he walked out of the room to the other waiting nearby before departing.

Another pair of dwarves remained behind, watching from the shadows of the upper balcony, waiting for the sounds to die away before they too took their exit, heading towards the upper floors through the construction. The pair walked slowly, as if digesting the scene they'd beheld. The smaller of the two spoke first.

"Well, I want to hear what you think about that display Solon." It was a tone that was used to being answered quickly.

Still, there was a pause before the other spoke.

"That was a very fine display of swordsmanship. One of the best I've ever seen."

"Truly? I'd not thought it possible for one dwarf to have so many varied talents. And to be so skilled in all. How many here do you think could match him in combat?"

"Seriously? Perhaps a half dozen in the fortress with certainty, and even those might lose given poor luck."

A second pause while that sunk in. "How many of those are ours?"

"Only one."

"I am surprised then, Solon. What would you say your odds are against him in fair combat?"

A longer pause.

"It's not a thought I would relish. I'd give him lower odds as he is now. But with time? Who knows."

That answer seemed sufficient for a time as the two walked up the stairs, passing others who glanced their way and only nodded in respect. When they were to themselves again, or relatively so, the smaller again asked:

"Do the others know of this skill at arms?"

"I think not. He is rumored for his skill with the pen, his mind for numbers, his ability to create intricate machines, and even carve things out of stone. His stamina and work ethic are impressive, but for all that he has few friends. Only five I think truly know him well."

"Do you think he is aware of the effect he has on others?"

The taller seemed taken aback by the question.

"You mean, the effect he has on me?"

"Solon, if I thought that you were so easily swayed I'd have had you killed years ago. I mean on commoners, on others in general."

A hesitation, perhaps because of the unexpected response, hung in the air before he sighed.

"I do not think so. No. I believe he is completely unaware of the loyalty that his mindset and his work has engendered. Hundreds have flocked to this place, taken up his standard as it were. They are uncharacteristically loyal. One of the guards refused to relay where he'd gone with the diplomat when Agna had questioned him. I suspect he was taken and questioned in depth, to no avail. The people protect him as he protects them."

"Ah, I thought something like that had taken place. Training accident my left boot. Still, such loyalty is admirable."

"Indeed. Rumor has it that anyone, even the lowliest peasant can approach him and make a request for something and he'll see what he can do to help, despite his gruff and unfriendly exterior. He feels duty-bound to help his people."

"It's interesting how well things work together around here."

"The obsidian mechanism on display at the waterfall... that's his creation. It's rumored to be the heart of the fortress, of Dorenemal. At times I think I can hear it beating when I'm standing there looking out at the sheet-ice. But I think that he's the mind of this place. Ragnar and Aardvark are his arms as it were, sword and shield, the pair of them. Bembul as well is a part of this, as are many others. They see themselves as part of a greater whole. It's empowering."

"The question is, what do we do with him? You feel this loyalty towards him as well, don't you."

"My loyalties lie with you. And always have."

"Liar."

"My loyalty lies with you, my Queen. I am yours."

"That I do not doubt..."

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **October 22, 2008, 08:09:36 pm**

This is an interesting turn of events...

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **October 22, 2008, 09:46:59 pm**

Good to see you writing more. I'm loving the story. Politics and intrigue, it's great!

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 30, 2008, 06:04:33 pm**

With my recent mobility and newly acquired workload I've had little time to prepare as well for the classes with the children as I would have liked. Still, they continue, though at this point I'm not sure the kids would let me stop. Particularly after this most recent lesson.

The initial discussions had centered around what could be considered a functional tool or weapon. The obvious answers were of course given before some of the older students got creative. My personal favorite was 'Logs. You could rig them up in some sort of trap that would crush something between two that swung down from trees on either side of a trail.' Not the most coherent, but certainly a valid response. I asked whether food and drink could be considered a weapon. There were a few gently shaking heads as the others considered it. Most finally agreed that it's presence could be removed as a form of weapon but that generally it in and of itself was poorly suited.

I smiled, pulling out a clear glass bottle that Dresdor had made for me. We were short on glassmakers and he'd had some skill and took up the post for my special project. Next to it I set a small glass, only half a hand high and filled it most of the way with the clear liquid from the bottle.

"Anyone know what this is?"

"Is it booze?"

I nodded. "Aye, it's alcohol, drink, moon-shine. Pick your name for it. But this isn't your normal stuff. Anyone want to take a swig?"

One of the boys, an older son of our brewer stepped forward boldly. "Ah'll take a swig. Nothin' me's ma kin make that ah can't drink." He reached for the bottle. Stopping him I handed him the shot glass and indicated he should face the group. He drunk it slowly as and then all at once as he tried to get it down before the burning took over. He coughed twice and gasped but tried to surpress any other reactions. Small tears came quickly and were quickly wiped away as he shook his head, handing me the glass back. He'd done better than I expected. I tried the stuff myself and could do no more than sip it slowly. It was strong. Distilled alcohol in it's pure* form was not something to be taken lightly.

"Whooooo-wee. That's strong. Ain't got no flavor though. Just bite."

I couldn't fault him there.

"This is pure alcohol. I want to teach you today about a weapon. Keep in mind that fire is a dangerous tool. It cuts both ways and can be used as easily against us as for us. I've got two demonstrations I want to show you. The first is with another mixture, one I wouldn't drink. So, let's head down to a room I've had prepared."

We funneled down to the very bottom of the north tower. It was unused and unoccupied, but I'd had a room specially prepared. There was only one way in and one way out. There were no cracks to speak of and I'd had a door installed that fit so smoothly the room was almost air-tight. A heavy greasing of the doorframe and edges of the door ensured a near-perfect seal. But the door was special. It wasn't the standard stone door. It was thinner, I intended it for a demonstration and it would only be good once. A large stone basin stood in the room filled with an oily mixture and a bucket full of water stood next to it as well as a large bag of sand and a heavy damp blanket. Three more bottles of the purified alcohol stood against the wall with rags stuck in the tops and into the liquid. I brought the only torch and stuck in on a rack on the wall as we entered.

"Now keep in mind this is still food we're talking about. Oil, fat, drink. These things don't mix well with fire."

I set the tub of alcohol/oil ablaze and it quickly took.

"So, first things first. Fire is dangerous. What's the best way you all know of to put out a fire?"

One of the kids raised a hand and quickly spouted off "Water!". The expected response.

"Good. Water works for most cases. Keep in mind it's not always the best thing though. When you put out something very hot with water you get a lot of steam as the water boils. That can be as deadly as the flames if you get too much of it. Anyways, go ahead, here's a bucket. Douse that fire in the tub. Everyone else take a few steps back. Don't want to get splashed."

The girl picked up the bucket and from a few feet away happily threw the water at the fire. Predictably the water hit the burning oil with a sort of hiss, splashing it all over the basin, but the oil quickly settled atop the water and continued. Some of the oil had splashed out and was blazing merrily on the stone next to the basin.

I patted the girl on the shoulder.

"Good job." She looked down at her feet disappointed.

"I mean that. Some fire you can't put out with water, so keep in mind the things fire needs to burn. Air and fuel. We can't go taking away all the oil from the flames but we can take away they air." I grabbed the damp blanket and tossed it over the burning tub, smothering the flames.

"Another way, short of using all our blankets could be to toss dirt on it. Here, you all give it a try."

I passed the bag of sand around letting them each get a handful before I poured a long line of alcohol on the floor from my bottle. When I was ready I tossed a little bit more to connect it with the small patch of burning oil on the floor and with a 'whoosh' the whole thing burst into flame down the line. The children's faces lit up and they went to with a will, emptying their hands and the bag onto the small trail of flame.

"Ok, now for this last demonstration I want you all to stand against the wall as near the door as you can get. You, you and you. I'll need you as volunteers."

I handed each of them a bottle from the floor and went to grab the torch.

"Now, keep in mind that we've only been playing with little fires. Things that can happen when you cook, or maybe hang around the furnaces. Alcohol can do much more though. These three bottles are an example. They're full of the pure alcohol, as soon as they're burning well I want you to toss them against the far wall as hard as you can. We'll all have to leave the room rather quickly after that and we can continue to discuss it in the next room over. All ready?"

A dead silence filled the room as I took the torch and lit the rags sticking out of the bottles. As soon as the fire took I nodded to the three throwers, I'd picked older children to reduce the likelihood of one of them dropping a bottle accidentally, and on my command they threw the bottles towards the far wall some thirty feet away. The silence was only broken by the sound of glass hitting stone and the loud 'whoompwhoompwhooooomp' that followed as three fireballs erupted from where only black obsidian had been moments before. As the room filled with the light of three bonfires we filtered out in silence to the other room sealing the door behind us, the children strangely silent as they took in the massive potential of such fireballs.

We discussed the usefulness of such tactics in combat only briefly, spending more time rather discussing what could be done were such things used against us. Using such a weapon offensively would undoubtedly lead to the need to protect ourselves from such things as well, and as I pointed out, some creatures like fire-imps were known to be able to magically conjure up fireballs to throw at things, and they were equally dangerous as the alcohol-based ones we had made.

The final lesson came after our discussion, and though compared to the fireballs, was somewhat anti-climactic, it still served a useful point. The door was warm to the touch, but not hot, and I gave it an experimental tug before being convinced it would work for my lesson.

I chose the largest of the children and asked him to open the door. He tugged on the handle, and pulled before finally the stone handle gave way to the stress and snapped off in his hand, the door still firmly shut.

"I just wanted you to see this as well. Call it an after-effect of such a fire in an enclosed space. I mentioned earlier that fire needed air to burn, and in burning it heats it up. The room there only had so much air. I've sealed the door and now there is air out here, but very little in there now that it's cooled. That's called a vacuum. The air out here is pushing against the door so hard that even Tun here can't open it."

I smiled.

"But that doesn't mean it can't be opened. It'd be nearly impossible to open just pulling on it. But if we can introduce a flaw in the door, a small crack or dent, it might be sufficient to break the door down."

I picked one of the girls in the class, the daughter of a marksman and one I'd seen playing with a sling before to throw the stone.

She whirled it around her head a few times before letting loose with a snap and the eyes of the class followed it. It struck the door nearly center, and with a massive 'CRACK' the door shuddered and buckled inward, air rushing back into the room with a gentle 'whooosh'.

It was a good lesson, and what child doesn't like to play with fire from time to time. It also served to let them know what to do about combating fire and got them thinking. Almost anything could be a weapon in the right hands. Or rather with the right mind.

((*technically water and alcohol form an azeotropic mixture at roughly a 9:1 alcohol:water ratio. Purification of ethanol after that is extremely difficult and can't really be done on a normal distillation setup. Sorry there's not much actual game-content, but I'm catching up with some other things. Besides, science lessons can be cool. These demonstrations can actually be done in real-life. I've seen a 50-gallon steel drum crushed with nothing but a good vacuum. I haven't used a Molotov cocktail personally, but I have made contact-explosives in small batches for demonstration purposes. Oh, and by the way, I'm a chemist in real-life, hence the geeky stuff. ;)))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **October 31, 2008, 01:51:32 am**

Great update. Your writing is as great as ever.

Sorry to be nit-picky, but fire does not create a vacuum. It puts out as much CO₂ as it burns up O₂. In regards to the classic egg-into-a-bottle trick, this thread (<http://www.physicsforums.com/showthread.php?t=179943>) explains it. It's still a really cool trick, though.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 31, 2008, 11:55:37 am**

((Heh, technically you're right there. The by-product of combustion is carbon dioxide which is produced in the same amount as the oxygen that is consumed. The trick actually to creating the vacuum is to super-heat the air in a space before you seal it off. Heated air is less dense than cold air. So if the room were heated drastically and then sealed (or a 50 gallon drum) and then let cool the resulting temperature drop would cause a vacuum to be created as the less dense air 'condensed' into more dense air. In a 50 gallon drum you can put a little water into it which helps and then fill it with heated air and steam. Water condenses even better than air so a very humid air or better, steam, when hot would create quite a good vacuum in a sealed container. That's actually the idea behind the vacuum/fire thing. It can be done with a candle and a mason jar in a basin of water. Affix the candle to a tub filled with water so the candle can still burn. Cover it with a glass jar and make sure the jar rests in the water. The candle will burn itself out in the jar when the air runs out and you'll rapidly see the water level rise as the cooling air creates a small vacuum in the space.))

((P.S. Huh. I just read the your link Fre. Funny how we used the same examples. Too much similar scientific background I guess. All these examples are standard in science classes. In the story though I am trying to be somewhat scientific but not technically so. I really doubt the dwarven society has any concept of molecular dynamics or anything like that. But these observations have been around for hundreds of years and would be easily accessable to them. Regardless, I've corrected the entry to be more scientifically educational. ;)))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 03, 2008, 01:11:53 pm**

5th of Moonstone

Zuglar, our Queen has given birth to another child today. A boy. The King consort seems pretty smug about it, so perhaps he is actually the father of this one. They seem to have the same hair color.

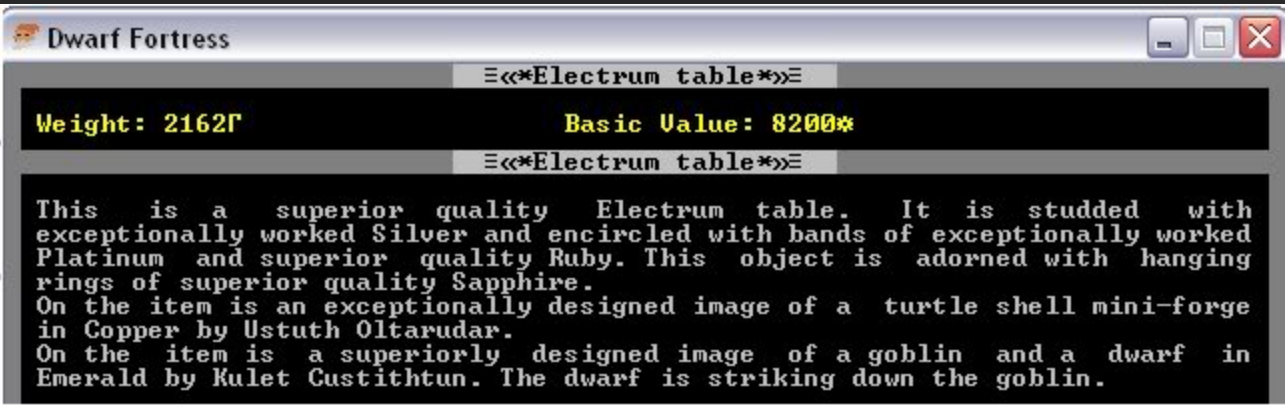
Udil, our furnace worker, gave birth to a girl as well. At least she got the congratulations of a good smattering of the people. It's also a rather convenient time for her, as we've just run out of wood to burn and have reached our cut-quota already. Still, the burners have done an excellent job. According to our records we have well over two hundred bricks of charcoal set in neat piles in, around and behind the furnaces. It's getting used, but slowly. Our weapon and armor production are stable for the moment, but we've been keeping our glassblowers busy on one of the original pet-projects of mine. Bembul seems to support it fully since it will allow us to farm out-of-doors in comfort in all seasons. That and it will be a nice preserve of sorts, that will remain untouched by axe. Perhaps the elves can stay there when they come to trade. We shall see. It's only about half finished and there is much to do still, and several other projects underway at the same time.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **November 04, 2008, 04:00:37 am**

A glasshouse! nice (and quite suited to the location)

11th of Moonstone

I was able to deliver Lord Rovod's table to his rooms today. I must say, it's a rather impressive piece of work. Our metalcrafter, Ustuth, in particular did a splendid job of it. It was a custom piece for Rovod, who has done so much for our metallurgical pursuits. Honestly, despite being a noble he has worked nearly non-stop smelting ore for years and even has been turning out some decent metal furniture, bins and barrels. Twas he who made the table itself to begin with. I requested a list of his favorite items to check against when he made the request for something nice to be added to his dining room. This was what I'd decided on. Sure, he knew of the table so it would be no surprise, but he hasn't seen it since it was cooling in his workshop.



I covered almost every gem and metal on Lord Rovod's favorite list, though we were short of dragon-bone. Naturally, as we've not had a dragon in this recent vicinity in over fourty years. He was very appreciative when I delivered it to him.

"Ah, Paulus. Is that the table? My goodness, you do know how to spoil a dwarf. It's just the thing I've been wanting in my dining room. Nice to be able to eat in style, and admire good crafts dwarfship. Now that we're so prosperous I felt it was time for an upgrade."

"I'm glad you enjoy it then. I mean, how in earth could you be expected to ponder fell beasts and treasure if you've little enough of it in your room."

A quick glance around would have dispelled that notion instantly, but personal possessions were just that. Personal. Not that he didn't have a great deal of them. Still, he, of all the nobles, had truly earned them. He was legend as a furnace operator, being able to trick the smallest grain of metal out of ores in seconds where others would have spent hours laboring in vain. His other talents were not inconsequential either.

He sat down in his polished obsidian chair, casting aside a small bone that lay in it, as he pulled it up to his new table.

"I love it. Particularly the engravings. This one in emerald is especially nice. Fell beasts indeed. Heh. And of course the copper one is very appropriate for me. Avuz's blessed forge. Nice piece of work that was too. How's her temple coming?"

"It's coming along well enough. Slowly but surely. The masons are laying the roof for it now. I'll begin work on the temple proper here soon enough. It'll have some nice features of course, and your skills will be greatly needed once decoration begins."

"I look forward to it then. I don't suppose you can tell me of your plans for the temple proper?"

I grinned. I'd kept them completely secret for now. Everyone knew we were making a temple, but no one knew what it'd look like yet.

"I suppose I can give you a certain lassitude there. Now, keep in mind that this is a rough sketching..."

"Yes, yes, out with it. I'm eager to hear what you have in mind."

"Well, it makes sense that the goddess of mountains, minerals and metals would want her glory displayed properly. The foundation layer will be polished chalk blocks in the shape of a four pointed star. Should we have enough material four counter-points will go in the non-cardinal directions, being small triangular pyramids in each corner. The next layer will be magnetite blocks, equally polished, forming a ramp to the top. The third layer and fourth will require your help, being iron and steel respectively. We'll need statues and furnishings in precious metals as well for the top, and suitable places to display her artifacts, the mini-forge there being foremost."

His eyes seemed to alight with eager anticipation at the completed project.

"Of course, we'll need some specialty work done. I've a few other additions in mind, like a secret chamber for the priestess, should we get one. And vaults and catacombs beneath it of course, for her faithful."

He smiled wide. "One would almost think you yourself worshipped her from what you've got planned. Well, if there is anything I can do for you let me know. I'm eager for our goddess to be worshipped as she should."

"Aye, well, Kashez the Velvety Incence has my devotion, but I do have few things I'd like in that regard."

I handed him a small piece of paper, designs and sketches for a few pieces of furniture I wanted him to work on.

"I'll get to these as soon as I can."

"Thank you Lord Rovod. I'm glad you enjoy the table as well." I made to leave before he interrupted quietly.

"Keep an eye out for yourself, Paulus. I've heard Agna's been trying to dig up some dirt on you. He's also taken to borrowing our philosopher's books on old law."

I nodded.

He looked concerned for a second, though it was hard to tell whom the concern was for.

"Ya didn't hear it from me though, lad."

I nodded again and smiled.

"Of course not. I was just here delivering a table."

26th of Moonstone

I had a little talking today with my younger brother. Apparently his wife decided that she still wanted some crystal glass items made, despite our inability to make such things. It is her prerogative as royalty, of course, but it is not that that I truly object to. I found out from Tarin that she's been going to Agna for advice on whom to punish for the crimes since the Queen has arrived. She wants to be seen as doing the 'proper' thing and following established channels. Apparently even Tarin had a talk with her, in light of what Agna has done for

us in the past, and she decided it was time to try to mend the rift between us, since we now live in the same place. I don't know if that is possible. We certainly aren't inclined to simply lie down and let him walk all over us.

In any case, it's another glassmaker that is bearing the brunt of Agna's efforts to slow our projects down. Now that I'm in charge of the large construction projects I wonder if he's doing it to interfere with me and make me look bad. It's unfortunate that Dresdor will be confined in jail for so long. A hundred and twenty five days. That's nearly a third of a year. I know what that's like. It's not fun. Still, Bembul should be on top of taking care of him so this time we'll have no 'criminals' starving.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 13, 2008, 10:55:34 pm**

1st Opal

As I was headed down from checking on the construction of the roof and preparing the design for it I saw a sight that cheered the heart somewhat. Kolok had apparently recovered fully from his injuries a little while ago and had gotten back in the swing of things hauling rock from the mines to get back in shape. He was reporting to Aardvark and Ragnar as I passed the barracks so I paused a bit to watch.

Kolok was standing at attention as the two inspected him. His gear gleamed that lustrous silver-blue that well forged steel takes on. I admit, he looked quite the sight. Not him as in him, but in steel high boots, greaves, gauntlets, helm and plate over a steel hauberk he looked more like an armored bear than a dwarf. A freshly polished steel axe hung in a loose scabbard on his back and a shield was strapped to his arm. Aardvark was busy inspecting the armor. Most of it was his own work, but some of it had been put out by Draco, and no doubt he wanted to see if it passed muster.

Ragnar was busy giving him the run down on army ettiquette and procedure, before sending him off to train. It's practice for the soldiers to have their own rooms. The champions in particular have the best rooms, those engraved both wall and floor, and provide a nice incentive to train hard. And to be careful. The walking wounded were not allowed to spar as a matter of protocol, and without the constant training few reached the skill required for such distinction.

Still, as I headed down I knew our people were in good hands. There was something that I could gain a measure of reassurance in. For some reason I'd been feeling a growing disquiet about me, particularly when all was silent and I could listen to the murmurings of the earth. I wasn't sure what it portended, if anything, but another dwarf trained and properly equipped couldn't hurt.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Flintus10** on **November 14, 2008, 04:12:56 am**

Ahh Youre narative skills are great and you also include all of the story dwarves evenly

Keep up the good work!

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 14, 2008, 10:58:02 pm**

11th of Obsidian

Bembul and I were walking through the vast dining hall towards the south building discussing fortress affairs.

"Yes, I agree, but I wish sometimes that things would move along faster if you know what I mean."

"I'll do what I can, Bembul. But, Gusilnakis wasn't built in a day either you know. And to be honest the noble's mandates haven't been helping."

"Aye, your brother's wife is still insisting on some adamantine goods. Heaven help the metalsmiths. And with Dresdor in prison I'd wager the glassworkers haven't been producing as much either."

"True, but from what I understand the length of term may have been deliberate."

Bembul turned to look at me as I said that, before we continued apace.

"Let us hope not. Still, from what I hear things are going well?"

"Yes, well enough. The ..."

A voice interrupted us from behind. I recognized it at once, and removed the quick grimace from my face before turning.

I nodded politely to her, as Bembul bowed slightly from the waist.

"Your Majesty."

Bembul too murmured his greetings.

"A pleasure to see you my Queen. And you Lord Agna." The Queen's advisor recieved a deep nod from Bembul, though I couldn't bring myself to such recognition. Agna gazed coldly at me as the Queen spoke.

"Ah, Paulus, I was hoping to run into you."

She put her hand lightly on my forearm as she spoke.

"I've been meeting with the generals of our armies the last few days and wondered if you might have some insight you could share about the goblins. I've left orders for our cook to prepare some mako shark roasts and I was hoping you'd join me for dinner and a drink in my dining chamber tonight."

That would explain the shouting and broken crockery in Fre's kitchen earlier. My mind went into high gear as I sought a reasonable way out of this.

I gave a stiff bow as I replied.

"I'm afraid you'll have to forgive me, my Queen. I've been discussing construction with Bembul here and I'm due to go below to the mines for some time to designate the stone we'll be needing. Ragnar would perhaps be a better person to talk to about goblin matters. He's had as much if not more experience than I in dealing with them."

I saw her eyes narrow only a fraction as she walked on.

"Well, perhaps another time we can discuss things over dinner then Paulus."

"Perhaps, my lady."

I heard Agna comment as we walked away. "I tell you, something about him is not right. I've told you before..."

"Aгна, you tire me with these comments. Still, have some strawberry wine sent down with dinner. Two bottles. I think I need to have arrange a meeting with someone else tonight..."

Bembul raised an eyebrow at me as I headed back towards the stairs and below. I merely shrugged.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 17, 2008, 01:05:44 pm**

1st of Granite

Another year has passed. The festivities in the commons are quite the party. It rages for nearly a day now, though our abundant supplies can easily handle such drinking. I stayed for a little while, more for show than inclination, before heading back to my office. I've been thinking a bit lately, ever since a strange dream I had a few days ago. I won't go into it in detail, but I believe I've been visited by Kashez, at least in vision. I saw clear as day a portion of the eastern cliffs, which held a deposit of a specific color, I think it was kaolinite or something like that. There will be the location of the shrine to Kashez the Velvety Incense that I've been dreaming about. It will also contain furnishings for a room and office should I feel the need for some meditation and peace from the others. Amusingly enough after my survey of it, it lies directly beneath a lake on the upper cliffs that has the shape of a heart.

As a quick summary of our census:

We have two hundred and twenty one dwarves currently residing within our walls. Twenty one of them are martial champions. Incidentally we also have now fourty six children. The royal appraisor estimated the total fortress worth in the area of five million ingots.

In any case, Dorenemal is well enough, though I fear that with the arrival of our Queen a sickness has arrived. There seems to be more disagreements than normal, and dwarves are beginning to be more ... selfish? It's hard to describe. I'm not sure if the Queen is the cause, or if, as I truly suspect, it is caused by such an abundance of people in an enclosed area. The disparity between the wealthy and the poor grows as the nobles seek to furnish their lodgings as they believe they deserve, while the poor who cannot afford what I consider a decent room, are turned out to sleep in the barracks.

I shall have to think hard on this. It makes me ill at heart to think of our clan divided so, but such is our society that it would be hard to change. Still, we shall see what I discover when I look into the matter more thoroughly.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 18, 2008, 01:10:09 pm**

11th of Granite

We'd opened the gates in preparation for the trading seasons ahead and true to form the elves arrived, braving the heavy snows still blocking most paths. They seemed pleased to arrive and told tales of safe paths being more difficult to find this year. I suspect that the goblins, though not direct enemies of theirs, are making travel hard for them as well.

It seems silly to me that they would make the journey at all burdened only with cloth. Cloth which we have no use for, as we have more than sufficient, and of better quality. They had a small basket of strawberries that I had Bembul acquire for Fre. She could do wonders with fresh berries.

Their diplomat has arrived as well and is in the process of meeting with the Queen. I expect little change in our agreements. We'll likely be limited to nearly a hundred logs again this year, which, considering the recently harvested forests, will not be hard to agree to.

Unfortunately, if the roads are passable enough to elves, then surely our enemies will find them passable as well. It's been common enough for the goblins to try to surprise us even in the dead of winter.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 18, 2008, 10:28:44 pm**

17th of Granite

We've ordered the gates closed again today. As it turns out we found two goblin corpses in our traps. Baby-snatchers. I went up to survey the clean-up and to make sure things stayed orderly. Much to my surprise two of our own found two more goblins lurking near the ramp. Zefon, our gemsetter and Kosoth a planter took it upon themselves to represent the dwarven women here at Dorenemal and express their feelings to the other two baby-snatchers in person. Most of the other civilians fled in terror but these two pounced on the goblins and began beating them into submission. Five minutes later Zefon continued to pound the now-unconscious goblin while Kosoth had hers in a strangle-hold which it did not seem to be resisting. Let it never be said that women are the weaker sex. Particularly not here at Dorenemal. Anyone that believes that can go have a chat with the Queen. Or preferrably with Urvad. Any dwarf that can attain champion rank in four martial proficiencies, bear nine children while in active military duty and knock a sparring partner across the room and into a wall, while pulling her blows should be able to persuade any foolish enough to broach the subject. I'm not expecting her to return that helmet for military use any time soon either.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **November 18, 2008, 11:39:33 pm**

Just thought I'd say, you're writing is *still* as brilliant as ever. Keep it up!

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 19, 2008, 03:35:29 pm**

18th of Granite

It's only been a day since two of our civilians beat two baby-snatcher goblins to death. I was above supervising the clean-up and discussing minerals with Deduk and Urdim, two miners. At least Deduk and I were discussing things. Urdim was off helping clean up the mess.

"I'm aware of the differences, Deduk. They're all red. But this one in cinnabar, this one is bauxite and this one is kaolinite."

"Aye, well, if ye say so. ... Sir."

I glared at him. "Don't give me that rubbish. I'm no more a sir than you are an aged geezer, lounging around the dining hall near the fire."

"Hmm... maybe someday then, aye." He gave a quick wink. "If ye say there's a deposit of this in the eastern cliffside Urdim and I'll find it fer ye."

We were startled out of our conversation by the shout.

"Ambush!"

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 20, 2008, 10:30:33 pm**

6th of Slate

Urvad gave birth to a healthy baby boy today. Named him Tholtig. In any case it's her ninth. Ninth! As I had imagined she continues to use that battered helmet of hers as a sling and carries the infant around with her, even in sparring sessions. I no longer fear for their safety. Should she come up against a foe I'd seriously consider fearing for the enemy. I still think back with some regret to the loss of Datan.

((Actually I looked him up and apparently he is still a member of our fort. His location? The exact spot where he was stolen, stuffed into a bag, and fell after his mom sliced the goblin into little pieces. For some reason it still lists him as alive, which is why she never mourned his loss. It also still lists him as a baby, though his younger siblings are now children, which is strange. I'm wondering if there is some bug in a recovery scenario when it comes to baby-snatchers. If I zoom to his location it shows me a grass covered tile. I fear to look in our bags (we have hundreds) to see if he might be in one of them.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Kuli** on **November 20, 2008, 10:55:23 pm**

Might be related to the bug in Migrursut where a child apparently disappeared, but closer inspection seemed to indicate he was somewhere inside a solid stone wall.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **November 20, 2008, 10:59:22 pm**

Hehe, some very appropriate religions you have there mate.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 21, 2008, 12:41:09 pm**

16th of Slate

Another child of Urvad's has done something rather interesting. Apparently little Udib was possessed and in complete silence ran around gathering materials he would need with uncanny knowledge of their locations.

He claimed two chunks of granite and one of kaolinite, some donkey leather, a larch and a pine log, a steel bar, some raw clear glass, pig tail cloth and a turtle shell.

The result is a very splendid and almost lifelike figurine of what we believe to be Litast Bristleinks, the child's deity. Before passing out on the floor and waking up a minute later Udib dubbed the idol Duradlerteth, or Beardtangled. Still, I may have to see if I can find and create a suitable location to display said item. Perhaps a small shrine would be appropriate.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 22, 2008, 03:19:59 pm**

25th of Slate

I suppose it's a good thing we have plenty of woodcutters. Kolok's experience with an axe is really showing now that he's in the military training. I was able to watch his official certification spar. He is now an axelord. Looks like we'll have to assign someone else to be a woodcutter should we need it.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 24, 2008, 04:21:59 pm**

13th of Felsite

I descended those stairs again to ensure that justice be properly served. Dresdor had been in prison for long enough and had served his time. I'd not have him rot there any longer than the law dictated. Visions of my own imprisonment tormented me as I stood outside the door where he sat chained. It was an unfortunate custom of our people, and more unfortunate that such things were occasionally truly necessary.

I regret that I've been so busy with things lately that I haven't had time to check in on him as I probably should have. When I entered he was busy trying to lure rats close enough to catch and eat. It was a disturbing sight seeing him launch himself at those that were just out of his reach. He had lost considerable weight, and I was briefly overcome by the dark phantoms of past, before I reached down to my belt for the key that would free him. He looked at me almost blankly as I released him, as if unsure what to do now. I took him by the arm to steady him and simply said.

"C'mon, lets go get a drink and a hot meal."

He followed me up the stairs again, light and sound flooding deprived senses as we rose from the dungeon. I ate and drank with him and glared at any who looked down upon his savage tearing into the food.

When he was finally sated I asked him what job he would prefer doing. The first words out of his mouth were:

"Statues. Must make statues. Egul requires it of me. Pretty statues."

I got the idea. I could only hope that eventually his mind would return to a more normal state of operation. But statues were something we could certainly use with work on the temples progressing. Perhaps the best of his we could reserve for a shrine to his goddess. I feared he would be of use for little else for some time.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 25, 2008, 01:48:23 pm**

The cold winds still howled outside, and winter seemed slow to relinquish it's grip this year. But we got our first taste of spring today. It rained, though in honesty, sleet would be more appropriate.

Unib Ensebzuglar, a pump operator training for the military has been struck down by Mistem. A mandate for adamantine items was not fulfilled. He had been sentenced to ten hammerstrikes, and Mistem is nothing, if not effective.

But this brings me to a very interesting observation. The kaolinite vein I've had 'removed' from the eastern cliffs is finished and I've had some quiet and loyal stoneworkers up there smoothing and engraving it in preparation. One of them came and told me it was complete and ready for my inspection. They'd done a splendid job, but while I was there I learned something absolutely fascinating about the location that Kashez has chosen for his shrine. Due apparently to an accoustic irregularity when I stand at the edge of the cliffs looking out I can hear almost every sound in the valley as if it were a mere five feet away. It's truly amazing but what was more insightful was a conversation I overheard.

...

"I must disagree, my Queen. I have reason to believe him highly dangerous, perhaps even treacherous to the kingdom."

"Pfah. Do not assume that you are the only one that has him under observation."

"Still, I am here to advise you and I advise against it. He..."

"No. I tell you, he would be far more useful alive then dead. It is my intention to convert him to our own... goddess."

A small silence.

"What? Surely you agree he would make a more useful ally than many?"

"Hmpf. That I will concede, though the thought of him joining us is repugnant to me. I will have to think on this matter."

"Hah, why don't you just admit it? You're still nursing that grudge you have against Atun. He's dead and gone, and you have married well enough. Give her up as well.

I will have him, Agna. Our goddess is persuasive and she has instructed me how to be so as well."

At this point I believe they walked back inside where I could not hear them clearly. I believe I shall have to ensure this location remains concealed and secure. And some clear glass windows would look nicely here. The middle one could open to admit sound, but could be closed to ensure quiet. Yes, I was beginning to like the location that had been chosen.

I would also have to take care. Perhaps I should be more actively trying to avoid the Queen.

((Happy Thanksgiving to all you americans out there. I'll be out of town visiting family for the remainder of the week and thusly internet-deprived.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 01, 2008, 05:07:06 pm**

21st of Felsite Late Spring 1062

If there is something I've learned since the founding of Dorenemal it is this. Busy dwarves don't cause problems. Nor are they easy to find. Heh. I've thrown myself into work. We had run out of logs, and I spent some time on the lower plateau with the woodcutters. Partly to ensure their safety, partly to ensure mine.

We're still a good deal shy of the amount of fuel we need. This seems to be a perpetual problem. I'm not sure what can be done about it. We harvest as much wood as reasonable. There are no more lignite or coal veins that we know of, though our miners may find more as we continue our exploratory mining. We import wood, coal, charcoal and lignite, so there is little I fear that can be done.

Speaking of mining, I was below in the mines, directing the exploratory shafts. To my pleasure not five paces from our existing shaft we found a decent patch of emeralds. Further in we found another vein of galena, should we need more silver for things. A second patch of emerald was found on the other side of the shaft, so the earth continues to yield up her riches to us.

P.S. Not long after me leaving were two patches of Chrysoberyls found and a patch of Kunzite.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 02, 2008, 01:37:37 pm**

13th of Hematite

I've had two really good ideas recently. Or at least I believe them to be good ideas. I've spoken with a few of the children I teach about cooperation and working as a group. I also proposed they help me with an experiment. They're keeping tabs on the Queen as we speak and any time she begins approaching where I am they're to warn me that she is coming. We've set up several fairly inconspicuous signals to communicate with. Though regrettably little Udib's idea about sneezing twice was accepted. I fear it may be a tad obvious but the other children liked it so much it was embraced unilaterally. I can imagine what it would be like, but before too long I wonder if the Queen will notice children sneezing around her.

I also spoke with Tarin about the mandates that are made. He'll speak with his wife about the possiblility of having a list of potential trouble-makers and using failed mandates against them. It is being tested out. The first such was Dastot, a marksdwarf that will be imprisoned for eighty days for failing to make an adamantine item. It may seem somewhat random but he's been drinking and chatting up several of the royal guard known to be linked to Agna. I'd like to discourage that sort of thing, and though it doesn't really seem fair, I refuse to be undermined by him in our own fortress.

In other news, the humans have arrived to trade. I'm not positive but I suspect I'm being watched.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 02, 2008, 10:34:37 pm**

17th of Hematite

I don't know who originally picks the days to hold general elections of mayoral positions. Whoever did it, either deliberately held them during the busiest time of the year, or were isolationists and didn't trade at all. I'd have chosen a better time, say winter, to hold elections, or perhaps the end of autumn, when more people have a bit of breathing room.

In any case, Bembul won a clear victory again. He has been the popular choice and thankfully I don't see that changing in the very near future. The fact that he is so loyal to the clan helps ease my mind. It has been considerable time since I 'lost' the election to him, and it bothers me not at alto have passed of that responsibility.

The projects continue well. The roof of Avuz's temple is finally complete and I only await the miners having cleared the remaining interior to begin construction there. Additionally I've begun construction of emergency exits/siege breaker towers. We'll have one for the upper plateau only for now. Should any goblins get trapped outside we can simply send a small force across a retractable bridge. It's in the north-west corner. I'd prefer the south-west upper corner to remain inconspicuous as our secret exit lies just below where the wall meets the cliff. Of course, it requires an act of near suicide to get in that way, but we'll leave a pick on the inside to carve a stair there should the need arise to leave.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 03, 2008, 01:08:18 pm**

23rd of Hematite

It's always busy during trading times, but a few days ago a kobold was spotted to liven things up. Astesh, one of our stonecrafters and creator of Sosadkaroth spied the thing coming down from the upper ramp. True to fashion she pounced on it, striking a heavy blow and knocking it down. As she pummeled the creature lifeless, fending off feeble blows with the oversized dagger a small crowd had gathered to watch. A ragged cheer went up as she finally knocked the thing unconscious, before braining it on the road, blood staining the silver bright red. The crowd quickly dispersed afterwards, each taking items to their appropriate locations.

The trading itself was less than was hoped for. I had the opportunity to inspect the wares with Bembul and though he did the trading I did recognize a guard or two from the old days, and they me. Apparently the trade routes were still difficult with the goblin threat and though we were holding our own in the war, and the humans as well, roads were still ... unsafe. They'd only been able to bring us ten turtles, twenty logs (a decent amount but less than we hoped for) and a large selection of metal bars they'd traded for at the last outpost.

Word had it that the goblins continue to attack travellers and that, though our forces in the south had met and defeated a large goblin army, the cost had been high. No one yet knew the strength of the goblin forces in their entirety and so the war would likely last many more years, despite the goblins taking heavy losses. If only they were the only ones taking losses...

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 03, 2008, 06:20:14 pm**

((This is totally out of character as I've come up against something that should prove fun near the end of the year. Any of you military types want to go glory hunting? Now's your opportunity. I believe the list of named units in the military includes Ragnar, Aardvark, Kuli, Kolok and Melonius. If any of you are interested in a 1 on 1 fun volunteer now. I'm a few months ahead of posts which provides me with a nice buffer to think about what I'm going to write.

Spoiler (click to show/hide)
You all already got plenty of combat experience later this year but the 1 on 1 is with a megabeast. I won't say which. May the toughest dwarf win! 😊

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Kuli** on **December 03, 2008, 09:37:11 pm**

Kuli Dancetreaties the Tenacious Machine of Lightning volunteers to do battle for the glory of Dorenemal!

Spoiler (click to show/hide)
...As long as it's not a Bronze Colossus. I'm pretty sure a Speardwarf would be ineffective against a Bronze Colossus.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **December 03, 2008, 09:41:30 pm**

pick me a random useless dwarf please, enlist him as a macedwarf of the name Crushed. Set him as the first to fight the megabeast, a true test of dwarven might! No previous training please, but if you must...

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 04, 2008, 12:44:08 pm**

((Kuli beat you to it Sonerohi, but I'll see if I can accomodate both of you. I may have some fun experimenting in any case.))

1st of Limestone Autumn

A fair wind blows through the area at this time of year, and I can think of few nicer times of the year to be born. Two more additions joined us.

Aban, a peasant and wife of Fath, one of our guard, gave birth to a girl.

A little closer to me personally, was the birth of the boy Atun, by my sister-in-law, the Dutchess Zefon.

It was a nice guesture of them to name their son after our foster father, and I hope that he will be able to live up to the name. On second thought, I hope he will have an opportunity to live, and do with his name what he chooses. Too often I fear are parents guilty of projecting their own desires onto their children, though why such a thing is done is not difficult to comprehend.

It is perhaps, a greater tragedy to place the burden on a child of doing something great, than it is should they not accomplish such a goal.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 05, 2008, 02:32:08 pm**

15th of Limestone

The dwarven merchant caravan has arrived, bringing with it what appears to be much needed goods. The wagons are stacked with wood, and one or two appear to be carrying bins of cloth and leather. It's the condition of the guards that concerns me though. One of them was confined to the wagon, propped up on logs carrying a crossbow. His leg had been obviously broken and lay, still at a slightly crooked angle next to the other. It had been wrapped with some cloth, but he clearly needed more permanent care. Many of the others sported injuries to a lesser extent.

Apparently a giant had seen them and decided they'd make a nice snack. They'd managed to injure it somewhat and drive it off, but not without injuries of their own. I'd heard that the mountains around here had been peaceful for some time so I wonder why it seems that now things seem to be on edge. It doesn't seem possible that the goblins are the sole cause, but perhaps we should be looking into this. The question is... how? By all accounts our military is still tied up fighting in the mountains to the south and east. Outposts and villages provide a screen of sorts against incursions from the west, though no true patrols in the mountains exist. It just seems strange.

Oh, and they caravan had 70 lumber, a decent selection of meat as well as leather and cloth.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 06, 2008, 11:34:43 am**

Another child, Lorbam, was seemingly possessed by a creative spirit today. For some strange reason he went to the special crafts workshop area. There surrounded by hundreds of glistening gemstones and ingots of precious metals he grabbed a single turtle shell and began work.

His creation? Ondinzeg, a turtle shell chain. Quite impressive considring I didn't realize it was possible to craft chains from turtle shells. Strangely it has an image of Mahoganys (sic) on it in turtle shell.

Oh, and in the common toungue the name means The Faded Tattoos.

It is an impressive work, despite it being somewhat anticlimactic in comparison to other such artifacts. There is something strange about it however that I may need to investigate when I have a bit of time.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 08, 2008, 12:45:00 pm**

6th of Sandstone

Recently we've had two more births to celebrate. Or at least, one birth to celebrate and one apparently to gossip about. Nish, our ever prolific guard has given birth to a boy recently. There was a small private party for her in the dining hall.

Our Queen, Zuglar, has also given birth, and it is that little male child that has caused much controversy. Apparently, he looks little enough like his father to raise questions, and rumor has it that a guard has been wagging his toungue about fathering it. Officially of course the child is of the royal couple, but the gossip has not ceased. Few seem surprised that the Queen would do such a thing, and the King consort has been somewhat moody lately, spending more and more time at the trade depot and the special crafts workshop 'playing' with the gems and precious metals there. I suspect that this will all blow over soon enough.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 08, 2008, 07:36:06 pm**

21st of Timber

The second of the large construction projects is now complete! The first being our defensive walls of course. That in and of itself took years, even though it was done in rough stone.

The roofing of the inner green space is now finished in green glass. This works well to act as a temperature buffer, so now we can use the southern building without having to brave the feet-high snow-drifts that tend to accumulate.

This also effectively makes this roofed in space akin to a greenhouse where, in theory, we could plant above-ground crops as well. I digress though, and for now this area shall serve as a location of refreshment and tranquility, outside of our normal structures and where we can go to see the weather without being in it. The trees in this area have also been set aside and not harvested since our early years. Should the need arise it may act as a wood source, but only at great need. I'm not much of a nature lover myself, I really prefer the deep earth of the mines, but some have that bent and can now enjoy it in peace.



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 09, 2008, 03:01:29 pm**

The south tower reverberated with the sounds of hammer and chisel, of stones being carried and laid and the shout of dwarves calling out to each other in the massive emptiness that now existed in the center of the structure. The air was chill, but not uncomfortably so, and many of the dwarves worked in their normal clothes, the labor ensuring that they keep warm enough. Already the massive base of the structure was being worked on and a single figure stood atop one of the walls, consulting papers in his hand and occasionally barking out orders.

Then for no reason at all he suddenly stopped, closing his eyes as if to think. Or listen. After several minutes he shook his head as if trying to dispell the peculiar sensations he had been paying attention to. He glanced down at the papers again uncertainly, barked out a few more quick instructions before rolling the mass up and tucking it under his arm. His quick pace would have been a jog or run for many, but he knew the way well, making his way to the barracks of the first hall. A plethora of sound assaulted his ears but he quickly sought for and found the dwarf he was looking for. Or one of them at least. His blue-silver armor was a dead giveaway and he kept it immaculately clean and oiled so that it shimmered in the dim lamplight of the barracks.

They held a brief consultation before the metal-clad dwarf called another over who quickly saluted both and listened before dashing off for the upper steps. It seemed strange to the runner that he was being sent at all, but once he crept to the edge of the parapet and looked out into the swirling mass of snow he didn't have long to wait before the inexplicably expected arrived.

Shouting out the alarm he stood, making his way back to the living confines.

"A vile force of Darkness has arrived!"

Then later,

"We are besieged from the east!".



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 10, 2008, 05:53:12 pm**

12th of Moonstone Mid-winter

As soon as the word had spread a quick chaos descended before being loudly, and where necessary, violently, subdued by Ragnar and Aardvark. It wasn't that dwarves were panicking, it's that too many of them were eager to watch. The last siege that had occurred had nearly been a disaster and the military leaders were more prepared this time. Aardvark quickly assigned the fortress guard to be stationed at the exits, preventing curious civilians from exiting into the battlefields or roof of the north-eastern building.

Ragnar, for his part had gathered many of the squad leaders, Urvad and Fath being notable exceptions, being off duty and having had their share of patrol during the year guarding woodcutters. The normal soldiers were assembled in the barracks, awaiting orders when Ragnar and Aardvark walked in.

Ragnar addressed them in his usual gruff manner:

"List'n up ye stone-totin' pack of lollygaggers. The bedlam o' the last siege was no' accept'ble. So... " there he paused," startin' now all guard will keep da civvies in check during combat. The rest o' ye will either help, or, fer those as haven't seen much combat, can observe from da' roof where possible. Mind, that only be valid when no enemy archers be present. Am I clear?"

A resounding "Aye, sir!" shook the floor as Ragnar raised his hand for silence again.

"Dis time you'll all watch how it's done from da roof. The squad leaders will accompany us. Kuli, Kolok! Fall in behind us. Melonius, you're roofguard. We've got the blighters trapped behind our gates now, so they're contained, but if we want traders next year they've got to be cleared. Now, dismissed!"

Outside the goblins chafed at being imprisoned, but their leaders calmed them. They knew that this is simply how things worked here, and that their only chance to get at the dwarves was an all or nothing attack. In many ways it made the work of the leaders easier. They'd not have to worry about any trying to flee at the sight of the enemy. Should they survive to fight their way to the mechanisms or beyond they would receive acclaim, prestige and wealth beyond imagining, and that was just what their leaders would bestow upon them. There were also the pleasures of conquest that came with success. It was worth the risk, in any case, and most were there willingly. When they heard the doors clang open against stone they knew that the enemy would be coming and now was their time of glory.

What they didn't count on was only four dwarves coming to meet them. Four dwarves striding confidently out of the warm mist billowing around them. Four dwarves with an eager glint in their eyes and battlelust on their faces. Four figures coming to greet them as if the dwarves of the apocalypse.

Four heralds of death.

The first outrunners charge them, but are stopped short as a series of blades spring up to eviscerate the creature. Two others mark the location and rush past their fallen comrade only to fall into shallow pits, surrounded by bars.

Aardvark turned to Kolok, grinning.

"Now, I know this is yer first battle, so stick with us and we'll help ye out if'n ye get into trouble."

Kuli gave a short laugh. "What he means is, he'll steal yer kill if'n you're not quick about it."

There Aardvark too gave a quick chuckle. "Hey, if you're too slow to keep up with the pack perhaps we should just put ye by the fire and give you a warm drink 'till ye die of old age."

It was then that Ragnar piped in, stone-faced and serious.

"Ach, yer both daft. What makes ye think'll leave sum fer ye?"

Kolok wisely remained silent as the other two considered for a moment before falling quiet themselves.

They passed around the corner to see the enemy upon them. Their scout had returned with an accurate count, thanks to their being seen well before entering the gates proper. Sixty odd goblins stood before them, many of them armed with their wicked iron weapons. All but Kolok had faced those odd before, and if any were afraid it was not voiced aloud.

The first group stood before them, almost surprised at their appearance, but undaunted. A few had swords with wicked edges along one side, but most were unarmed, prepared to pile on an enemy till it could be stabbed to death. Aardvark and Ragnar led the charge, the first cutting a goblin down in a single stroke, cleaving it from shoulder to hip. Ragnar has no less success and his mighty blow connected, cutting through metal armor and flesh and bone, cleaving deep into the goblins chest before sending him slamming into the goblins coming behind. Kuli and Kolok quickly tore into the goblins that were trying to flank the others, striking blows where possible, parrying or dodging counter-attacks when made. The dwarves were obviously superior combatants. The first few seconds of combat were illustrative of the last seconds of the lives of the first squad of goblins.

The second squad of goblins consisted of wrestlers and speargoblins, and after seeing the carnage wrought just ahead of them braced themselves for the charge of the dwarves of Dorenemal. Little enough good it did them. Kuli matched them spear for spear and smote one of the speardwarves on the line down in seconds, creating an opening the others exploited with their shields, deflecting the barbed weapons of the goblins as the cut into them. Kolok felled goblins as he had felled trees but months earlier, with speed and apparent ease. The second squad lasted longer than the first, if only because three broke and ran for the upper ramps, Aardvark shouting for the upper gates to be shut as he ran to catch them. Two were caught in the traps on the ramp but the third made it past, scrambling desperately to escape the heavily armored dwarf paces behind him. He had almost gained the gates as they slammed down and turning to seek a place to hide he had only a fraction of a second to see the axe slamming down upon him.

By the time the third squad had been decimated the soldiers on the roof were cheering on the champions and calling out jeers to the remaining goblins. The fourth squad was already decimated by the time Aardvark and Ragnar arrived. Melonius had been firing on them since the early stages of the siege and their leader had been slain, scattering the others in hopeless despair. Almost as a parting shot Ragnar slammed the body of one of last six goblins alive so hard it flew from near the ramp by the east gate into the fortifications behind which Melonius was firing, splattering him with blood, as well as several soldiers behind him.

The siege was broken to cheers from the soldiers as Ragnar, Aardvark, Kuli and Kolok stood, cut, bruised and covered in gore but victorious near the shut east gate. The heroes were welcomed back and feted with enthusiasm below in the dining hall. Those that did not or could not watch the spectacle were regaled by those who did, and it was not idly that the four were called champions of Dorenemal. Melonius was titled Melonius Isanoddom Akum Lisig or, Melonius Stillcloisters the Catch of Berries, in no small part due to being hit by a flying corpse. Kolok has been titled Kolok Berbesmar erkon Solam, or Kolok Earthenpulleys the Infinite Master of Nations.

((Final kill count
Aardvark: 19 kills
Kolok: 11 kills
Ragnar:21 kills (winner for this siege)
Kuli: 5 kills (unfortunately your neck wound contributed much to this)
Melonius: 3 kills

And a screenie for the gore effect...))



Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 11, 2008, 04:35:15 pm**

10th of Opal

Dozens of dwarves were still out sifting through the light dusting of snow covering the equipment, corpses and body parts that the goblins had left behind in their neglect. Dumping it all was time consuming, but it reflected well on the Mountain home that it's streets remained clear most of the time. It was perhaps with trepidation then that the dwarves outside listened to the voice that they heard carrying over even the frigid wind that blew up from below. Had the gates been open it might have sparked a panicked riotous retreat back to the safety of the fortress, but thankfully such was not the case.

"I am the Titan Orshar Aluthkobem and I have come to challenge a champion of Dorenemal!"

I was one of the many that gathered on the roof of the north building to get a look at the challenger before deciding what to do. Ragnar and Aardvark joined me there before too long to gaze eastwards at the threat standing bare in the snow-locked cliffside. It was hard not to admire the physique of the femme-fatale standing there, impassively awaiting a response.

It was then that a voice was heard behind us, causing several other annoyed and angry voices to be heard only briefly as they were shoved aside.

"Make way for the Queen!"

The pair of Royal guards stopped as they reached us, indecision mirrored in their faces, before a voice came from behind them, contrastingly sweet. She was looking directly at me when she spoke, though her words encompassed the others.

"Ah, good, I'm pleased to see you all here. Well, Captain, what is to be our response?"

Aardvark swallowed only slightly, but did not look away nor flinch.

"Kuli has volunteered to fight. In fact he was so hasty about it that..."

She cut him off as she saw the Titan for the first time, raising an eyebrow as she looked over the figure there.

"No."

Aardvark was a little taken aback and queried, "Your Highness?"

"No, let Kuli stand as second. There is a dwarf of the guard, one Crush Hamespirals. Send him."

A cloud passed briefly over Aardvarks face and it was then that I knew two things. He was the guard that had started the rumors about the Queen's last child. He also stood little chance.

Grimly, Aardvark saluted and stalked off, boots ringing out louder than normal as he tramped to deliver the mandate of the Queen. Undaunted she walked over to the parapet to address the intruder.

"I am Zuglar, Queen of the dwarves. What right have you to disturb our peace? Begone from here while you may."

The titan laughed lightly, her breath creating a mist that obscured her face for a few moments each time.

"I care not who you are puny dwarf. I have slain seventeen trolls in combat and fear no midgets like you. If there are no challengers I will throw down your gates and doors and crush the lot of you for sport!"

The queen, for her part, scoffed slightly at the suggestion and began condescendingly.

"You think trolls our superior? You are indeed dim-witted then. Very well, you shall have some sport, but know this, our champions will not be disturbed by your idle boasts. We will send out a dwarf to prove your worthiness of the champions. He has little enough skill and is of no more use to me. You may do to him what you can."

The titan frowned but began stretching in the cold, eager and awaiting the challenge. She had little to wait as the gates opened to admit two small figures. One remained by the gate, rocking lightly back and forth between his heels and the balls of his feet, spears resting upright in the snow next to him. The other advanced haltingly, shield and mace held at the ready as he approached the Titan.

They saw each other and nodded, one encased in steel but barely reaching the waist of the other, who stood as she had been born in the swirling snow. She began charging him and he started running as well, a silent ballet out in the howl of the wind and ice. The first blow struck was audible, only because it rattled Crush's armor so badly he was knocked on his back paces behind where he had started. The titan pounced upon him, hoping to take advantage of the position but was unable to get a grip on him as he wormed his way out and back to a standing position. He struck with his mace repeatedly, scoring a few minor hits which Orshar shrugged off as easily as the cold. The battled back and forth for a half hour, neither able to gain the upper hand. Crush acquitted himself well, always managing to break the grip of the titan before counterstriking and dodging away. Time seemed to stop for them as they dueled.

An hour passed, then two, then four. The sun set slowly locked in mortal combat and the moon rose in the cloudless night sky, a deadly chill settling over everything except the two combatants who still struggled, locked in each others grip. Early the next morning it as the pink dawn tinged the sky and the winds changed direction, coming in from the west now, it looked briefly as though Crush might have gained the advantage. The titan had lost her grip on his arm as he spun away, and finding himself behind her struck a mighty blow to her back. A resounding crack echoed as the mace hit, but she rolled with the blow, blunting it's force. A wave of nausea fell upon her as Crush advanced, hoping to land a deadly blow. The wind kicked up then in a swirl and blinded him momentarily and when it had passed his advantage was gone, the titan advanced again, rubbing her sore back, a grim look on her face.



All that day they battled as well, the titan beginning to show signs of weariness, a sluggishness that sapped the strength and energy. Once he was nearly thrown from the cliff, twice he was nearly crushed beneath her as she jumped at him. The spectators had long since dwindled to a few, wrapped in furs, who stood watch, more out of duty and interest. The queen returned that afternoon, almost surprised to see her fellow still standing. Idly she commented as if in passing, a small smirk lifting one side of her face: "Well, he always did have a lot of stamina..." before withdrawing again to the comfort of her rooms and food.

One grim watchman stood ever silent near the gate, watching the combat as if entranced, as if oblivious to the elements around him.

It was his old sparring injury that finally did the determined dwarf in. He had just been grabbed by the titan when he felt his back siezing up and he knew then that he was in trouble. He passed out briefly only to come to by the sheer amount of pain in his limbs. Grunting he wrenched himself away from the titan's grip to stagger a few feet. She seemed amazed at his ability to continue to daunt her but did not relent. His leg hung twisted on one side and would no longer support weight, his shield arm hung nearly useless at his left side and rents in his chainmail were showing his ragged clothing underneath. The titan led in with a forceful punch and he was unable to dodge away in time, catching it in his lowered head but still reeling at the force. The titan descended upon him and looking at her from his position he only had a single thought before he blacked out. "There are worse ways to go..."

Kuli advanced on the Titan from his position at the gate as soon as he saw the titan's finger curl around Crush's throat. He knew then that the guard had lost, but saw some chance at saving him if he acted quickly. His orders had been to wait and stand as the guard's second in the challenge. Should he too lose the fortress would lose face to the challenger but after his observations of her combat style he had ideas that he could use to his advantage. Trying to distract her he called out:

"Hoy, ye've beaten him well enough. Ye wished to face a champion of Dorenemal, well now ye have yer chance. Come face me. I am Kuli Dancetreaties, the Tenacious Machine of Lightning!"

Wearily she released the limp form in her hands as understanding dawned on her. She looked from the ragged chainmail of her former opponent to Kuli, standing calmly in the snow, cloak thrown back revealing his, in places, gleaming steel plate beneath. The rest of his armor hadn't been fully cleaned from the siege only shortly before and still sported bits of goblin and spots of dried blood and gore. Orshar knew then that she had been wrong to underestimate these little folk, that she might be outmatched by this dwarf who, she thought, she had heard of. Her doubt gave way to training as she stood, sucking in air and trying to catch her breath.

Trying to surprise her opponent she feigned weakness as they closed, more warily than before. Then in a rush she lashed out at him, catching him across the shield and knocking him back a step. She tried to grab him in a bear-hug and pull him into her grip but he danced

away, stabbing her lightly in the thigh. To his surprise his thrust penetrated poorly and he marvelled at the innate toughness titans possessed. She grabbed at him again, grasping at his arm but he shook her off. A blow to the head dazed him as she continued to rain punishment upon him, but her strikes were equally ineffective against his armor. As she grabbed his shoulder to spin him he threw her forcefully off, sending her exhausted to the ground but only briefly. Pulling herself up she drew herself into a crouch and jumped at him as he stepped back and thrust the butt of his spear into the ground, planting a foot upon it. Her own weight drove the spear through her and had it been a lesser weapon it might have shattered and broken, perhaps sparing her the fatal wound, but it was forged steel and dwarven craft proved true. Thus the titan Orshar Aluthkobem perished at the hand of Kuli Dancetreaties.

Kuli hurried over to Crush, bending over his broken form and checking the extent of his injuries. It was bad, very bad.



Kuli stood a silent vigil over the last few minutes of Crush's life and though he did not wake Kuli softly whispered into his ear as he began struggling for breath:

"Do not worry. We will see you buried in honor."

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **December 11, 2008, 09:52:47 pm**

I do believe that that was very, very awesome. Thank you for letting me go first Paulus, and thanks to Kuli for making sure I didn't die in the big sweaty manhands of a titan.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Kuli** on **December 12, 2008, 09:17:39 am**

The glory of this victory belongs to Crush. All Kuli did was finish the creature off after Crush weakened it. Rest peacefully, noble dwarf!

Good work, Paulus.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 12, 2008, 01:28:22 pm**

((Actually he did much better than I expected. He couldn't do enough damage to kill her though. The spine injury he inflicted was lt. grey and the only one that was still there by the time you got your turn. So in essence you were fighting a perfectly fine Titan, though admittedly she was tired still. So, though it was a near stand-off between Crush and the her it's wasn't that way with you. I made it seem shorter than it actually was with you since it ended suddenly. Technically in game time you two fought for two days before you got the critical, so you were both exhausted when you got the lucky shot. So don't sell yourself short. You got the kill and deserve the glory, though Crush likely helped some by wearing her out a bit first. It was just too hard for her to get past the steel armor you guys wore until Crush got really tired.

I had some fun and actually reverted to the save several times to see how each of us handled it. Most of us (Aardvark, Ragnar, Kuli, Kolok and I) had little difficulty defeating her without help at all. Crush, well, he was a guard with a spinal injury and so was a novice Shield and armor user with only chain armor and a Macedwarf skill with his weapon. So really, he did much better than I would have thought. I haven't had any other megabeasts come yet, but I'm guessing that the Titan is probably the weakest of them?))

12th of Opal

Apparently while I was preoccupied with the Titan, Lolor, our clerk, has given birth to a little girl. I congratulated her and gave her a little time off from recordkeeping. She'll be back at her desk in a day or two.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 12, 2008, 07:19:49 pm**

7th of Obsidian

Amost, a planter, left his work earlier today loudly proclaiming he'd had a great idea. He went topside to grab a single larch log that we have set aside and claimed a craftsdwarf workshop next to the siege workshop.

For three whole days and nights he worked without ceasing.

I passed him again after that in the dining hall, showing off his creation. It looked like a large, perfectly smooth section of larch, cylindrical like a log but polished smooth on all surfaces. I had to wonder what it was until he pushed on a section that slid effortlessly away until the thing looked like a smallish square box. He calls it Amallar Monom Morul, or Taughtmeets the Paper of Paging. Strange name for a puzzlebox. It is almost entirely unadorned and was made out of that single piece of larch, nothing else. Needless to say it's nice, but not truly that impressive.

I wondered if it coincided with the equally minimalist previous artifact for some reason but saw no connection between the two.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **December 12, 2008, 11:50:07 pm**

((Yeah, titans are the weakest. i'd say hyrda's are next, dragons after that (since they do have the whole fire thing), and bronze colossus's being the toughest (they're bronze, dammit!)))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 15, 2008, 04:07:48 pm**

The queen rubbed her temples. She shouldn't have drank so much last night, nor allowed her new 'toy' to get her so drunk. It was her own fault for having the kitchen bring up a keg of each kind of their finest. They just made such good stuff here it was hard to resist. And why should she resist! It had felt good at the time and she knew that another tankard of it now would clear her head. It wasn't that that gave her the headache she now felt though. She'd been informed that the elven diplomat had arrived and was on his way down.

She hated dealing with the limp-wristed, pansy-assed (heh they always bring donkeys...) rope-reed wearin', flaming tree-huggers. She had considered sleeping with one years ago, just to see what they were like in bed, but even thinking about it now made her shudder with foreboding. Thank goodness the races weren't mixible. That was not a crossbreed that she'd like to see. No, even she wouldn't sink to that level.

She sighed again, rubbing her head as a knock was sounded at the door. That'd be him now.

She nodded at one of the royal guards, now stationed inside her door to let him in, setting herself behind her jewel-encrusted table and playing her fingers idly across one of the sapphires set into it. It always made her feel just a little better for some reason, but even that was insufficient for such a meeting.

The diplomat strolled in, cockily, as if he knew that the beleagured nation could not risk angering yet another enemy. He sat, unbidden in the chair opposite her and looked almost disdainfully at the wealth she had displayed, sneering at the sheer amount of waste, the abuse of nature that must have occurred for it to be there.

The meeting began, but she wasn't really listening. Her mind was elsewhere, distracted by the intricately carved table, or thoughts of the previous night. She smiled slightly, absently, as the diplomat continued, taking that for a good sign. It was when the door opened that her attention became riveted. People were not allowed to interrupt their meetings. Not for trivial things. A guard came briskly striding over to the table and bent to whisper in her ear. Her face drained of emotion, an unreadable expression came across it briefly before her brows furrowed. The elven diplomat leaned in to see if he could get any hint of what news had come. It didn't seem to be good. It wasn't, but inwardly the queen was smiling. She had the pointy-eared bastard right where she wanted him now. This was looking like it would indeed be a good meeting after all.

Her scowl did not lesson as she waved for the elf to continue. He began again after a slight pause, and she again appeared to be distracted, running her right hand over an intricately carved image of something in ruby. As if on cue, two royal guards detached themselves from pedestals where they stood as silent as statues and drawing their weapons advanced upon the diplomat until they stood behind him to either side. He quickly noticed and nearly stood, an outraged expression and the words: "What's the meaning of this?" on his lips. He quickly sputtered as one of the guards unceremoniously slammed him back down into the obsidian chair.

The queens face was serious as she explained: "It appears my dear, whatever your name was, that your merchants have arrived above. While coming to the trade Depot they were supposedly 'attacked' by a goblin with a knife. They convinced one of our leaders, one Paulus Fahlstrom a well known and well liked bookkeeper and mechanic, to go investigate. He did and was apparently ambushed by not one but two groups of goblins on the southern slopes."

The diplomat went pale and began to speak when she cut him off again.

"When reinforcements went to help save him they discovered a group of no less than six goblin assassins concealed on our road, seeking entrance to our fortress. ((3 thieves and 3 babysnatchers actually))

Seeing as we are aware that your nation is on, at the least, amiable terms with these goblins, I begin to wonder if you yourself are not allied with them and sent to assassinate me at this time."

The diplomat remained in silence, contemplating how on green earth he would save his skin and salvage the situation.

He tried to speak twice, before closing his mouth and sitting there in silence.

Zuglar let him stew in silence for some time before continuing, inwardly giddy, outward cold as the stone around her.

"This is what we will do... judging from your reaction you appear to be no assassin, so you may live. Be aware that your actions have strained the relationship between our peoples and that any further action in this direction will lead to appropriate and warranted responses in kind against you and your people across our kingdom. You tread on dangerous ground amongst us now and we will watch closely any further presence of your people in our mountains. Now... begone."

He rose, tight-lipped and pale, though with fear or anger it could not be told. Before being escorted out he turned:

"And our treaty?"

The queen sighed again. She had been hoping he'd leave without remembering.

"We've kept to our side of it. And can agree to no less than a hundred and fourty three trees for the following year."

"And Paulus? Lives he still?" The diplomat asked this last without any trace of cynicism or disregard.

The queen sighed, but even here she was able to show their position of strength.

"He's fine. 'Twas only a dozen what ambushed him. From what I hear none of them escaped."

The elf nodded, some relief showing on his face. The figure for trees was high, but the diplomat was in no position to barter and merely nodded before departing, his final barbed words echoing in the nearly empty chamber. The queen ground her teeth. She, of all people, at a height slightly below the dwarven average of four foot seven, hated that parting line. One of these days she'd have an elf flayed alive for it, if only it were more warranted.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 16, 2008, 12:38:56 pm**

Both Urvad, our champion, and Udib, our guard, gave birth this past week. Two more fine male children to add to our growing ranks. I begin to wonder how long Urvad can keep this up. At this rate, in twenty years her family and two or three others will outnumber the rest of the fortress. Still, I have to admit we can use more dwarves like them both.

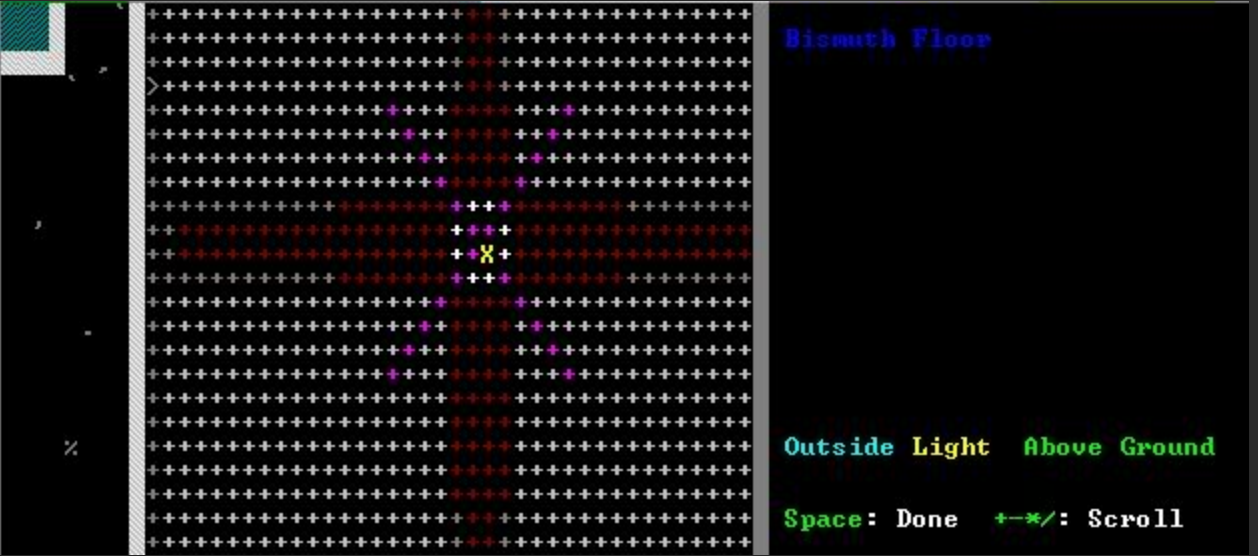
Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 16, 2008, 06:32:44 pm**

Well, after an unauspicious start the rest of the spring has gone by very productively. After the ambushes on the southern slopes I've spoken with Aardvark, Ragnar and Bembul about building an extension of our wall down there to help ensure our safety. It's not really needed, but would allow us to fish and harvest the trees there in a quicker and less interrupted fasion.

Work on both the temple and the observation tower of our grand staircase are going well. The observation tower should allow us to

maintain a guard there to give us a better lookout for incoming hostile forces.

But I'm particularly fond of the temple complex. We've finished with the outer walls and have been working mostly on the interior, but I was able to go to the upper cliffs to get a better view of the design on the roof now that the snows have thawed on it.



Above is an image of a four-pointed star in Granite and Obsidian (background), Kaolinite (red) and Silver and Bismuth (center white and purple).

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 17, 2008, 02:40:28 pm**

13th of Hematite Early summer and the only nice season of the year to be aboveground

The humans have arrived while I was below. I could feel the rumblings of their wagons through the stone. Though with me no longer being the broker, nor with Abba bringing us much needed goods it seems a bit anti-climatic to me. It seems to me that the much of the fun in life was taken out of it by the unnecessary complications of life that success inevitably brings. I feel I'm growing weary of it. The constant struggle against stupidity. Fighting goblins is easier and simpler. Or delving in stone. I almost miss being in the rocks and earth like in the early days.

Working on temple construction has been nice, I must admit. It's comforting to see a project come together, with dozens of people working on different parts and once without knowing how it all fits together. That and it gets me away from the crowds in the main halls. The first level is now complete and work on the second has begun, though we're short on Magnetite blocks even though Cepheid has been working long hours on them exclusively. And we do need a few more Kaolinite blocks for the edging of the second level. I wish now we hadn't used so many on the observation deck roof, but the fields of red and white up there are appropriate colors for our fortress.

P.S. Looking back I wish I had gone up to see the traders. By the time I did finally make it up there the merchant liason apologetically informed me that he had brought a letter for me from Abba, but that it had been confiscated shortly after he had arrived and begun asking about my whereabouts. The Royal guard has been stationed at the trade depot during visits because of the tightened security imposed by the Queen after the elven incident. Or maybe I should say so-called incident. I don't believe for a minute that the elves intended to send me out there after a goblin so they could ambush me, any more than I belive their diplomat could be an assassin. I suspect it's an attention diverting/grabbing ploy, but for what purpose I'm not sure. Now I shall have to see if I can find out which guard confiscated my letter and determine whom he is loyal to. I can only hope it was one of Tarin's guards and not Agna's or the Queens.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 17, 2008, 07:35:58 pm**

24th of Hematite

As a sidenote, Zefon, our non-crazy glassmaker discovered a kobold trying to sneak in. As per Dorenemal form she pounced on it immediately and began wresting it's dagger away from it. She was having somewhat of a hard time of things when Tholtig, our other hunter and resident bonecarver (Led is the first in both categories), came up the stairs to see them wrestling. Despite the fact that there hasn't been game in our hills in years, largely due to Led and Tholtig, he still carried his crossbow and with a few well-placed shots put the thief down. Amusingly the thief died two paces away from the doors to our refuse pile. Pretty convenient a place to die. If only goblins were so accomodating. Of course, goblins lack the intelligence to bypass our traps.

((Now that would be something cool to mod or hardcode in... racial knowledge of pre-existing traps. If your friends or squadmates perished to a trap then they know it and could avoid it, providing it wasn't removed and rebuilt elsewhere. Traps are somewhat cheap and make things way too easy. I'll be cutting them down or out entirely in the future. With the exception of a few well-placed cage traps so that arena combat can still occur.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 18, 2008, 03:20:52 pm**

26th of Hematite

Lolor burst into my office from next door as I was going over the designs for the upper floors of Avuz's temple. She was short of breath as if she'd been running, one child still strapped to her back, the other's pattering feet could be heard running down the hall after her. She held a piece of parchment in her hands.

"I ... thought ... you'd want to ... see this."

I took the paper from her hand and perused it. It was the official copy to be filed of a punishment given for a failure to comply with the production mandate for adamantine... wait a minute... I rushed out of the room heading towards my brother's chambers. I knocked once before barging in. He was there and looked surprised at the fierceness of my glare as I pushed the paper in my face.

"Explain this!"

He looked at the paper for a minute and nodded until he saw the name of the person to be punished. The look of surprise on his face told me then that it was not his fault. If I'm anything, it's a decent judge on intent.

He stammered. "I knew about the failure to craft adamantine items, my wife finally got fed up with it again and we agreed to use the next name on the list that we've covered. But it certainly wasn't Ragnar. Nor was the sentence quite so severe. Let me check on something. Wait here."

He thought for a minute, then headed out, returning not five minutes later.

"Like I thought. I knew she had a meeting this morning with the Queen and her advisor. Agna offered to submit the form to Mistem and took it after the meeting. He must have changed some of it."

"Well, what can be done about it."

He looked a little sheepish, his voice subdued.

"At this point... nothing. The sentence has likely already been carried out. This is considered a minor thing and so no allowances are made for things like this."

"Two hundred and one days in prison is minor?" My voice was beginning to rise. "This is Ragnar we're talking about!"

"I'm sorry, but there's really nothing we can do about it. At least in official terms."

"Hmph, well, I'll see what I can do unofficially then."

Lolor had already left by the time I got back to my office and I was able to sit and think in quiet. Some ideas came to me, and I saw no reason, legally why I shouldn't be able to act upon them.

-Later that day-

It took considerable resolve for me to make my way down the dark halls towards the jail. Walking those paths hasn't gotten easier since I left that hole, but perhaps I would be able to change that somewhat in the future. It was long since time I came again, if only to remind myself of the potential for abuse in the system.

Ragnar had been placed in the same corner of prison I had been in, and he looked none too happy about it.

"Hav ye come ta set me free lad? 'Cause if not and I hav ta stew here fer as long as they say I'll gonna be bashin' me some heads when I get out."

"Sorry Ragnar. At this point I lack authority to do something like that. But what I can do I will."

I gave a short whistle and the sound filled the room, passing up the hallway. Other sounds answered, steps and occasional grunts as dwarves began bringing goods into the prison.

Ragnar looked a little taken aback as a bed was situated next to him, as well as barrels of food and his favorite swill. The final touch was having Ondinzeg installed in the middle of the room. There was something about it that just cheered dwarves up, despite it being a chain.

"It's the least we can do for ye Ragnar. That bed is now designated as your quarters, so consider this more like... an enforced vacation. I'll see that you're well provisioned."

His look softened somewhat, but he still looked annoyed.

"Aye, well, perhaps I won't be bashin' skulls in then. But this better by my sewer brew or I'm complainin' ta management."

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 18, 2008, 04:41:13 pm**

16th of Galena Late summer 1063

It seems that this warm summer air makes those pregnant with children want to lose that little extra weight, and rid themselves of the second internal heat source. We've had three children born in just the past week.

Nish, our prolific guard, gave birth to a girl on the 10th.

Zefon, our brewer, gave birth to a boy on the 13th and is already indoctrinating him in the pleasures of the brew.

Our dutchess also gave birth to a boy today and has called him Tony, after our own. I'll admit I've been less than cordial to her since Ragnar was imprisoned, but I couldn't not go by and see the boy. Admittedly he doesn't look like Tony, but that's no surprise there. He does have a great resemblance to Tarin though, particularly when crying. Funny.

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 19, 2008, 02:26:08 pm**

16th of Limestone

Three things of note have occurred recently. The trade caravan arrived today from Etagzasit. They have certainly done their best to accomodate our wants this time around and have brought much wood as well as some food, along with their superfluous amounts of cloth and leather. We were able to trade a considerable amount of finished goods, mostly stone crafts, instruments, toys and clothing for all that we wanted.

The observation deck is now finished and we are able to see for miles around us from that elevation. Unfortunately it was the cause of the third notable thing that happened. The staircase that allowed acess to the roof for work on it was being removed when a part of it fell from the heights. The block fell 23 stories onto our fortress below. We were fortunate. It struck part of the original stone wall and stopped there. It scared the living spit out of a farmer that had just walked through that location carrying some goods. A pace or two to either side and it would likely have punched through the floor/ceiling and probably have continued down through our fortress for several more floors, potentially through our barracks, craftssshops, metals storage, dining hall, and two floors of bedrooms, in that order. The potential for injury would have been considerable.

Needless to say, there will be no more such 'deconstructions' up there. Such tactics I suppose could be potentially used as a form of trap or defensive measure should it be needed, but there would have to be a more reliable method for timing. I doubt anything would be able to survive a fifty pound stone falling on their head from two hundred feet up.

((Here's an interesting tidbit I've learned.

~~How to create black sand using natural obsidian stone:~~

~~1. Mine out an area of obsidian so you have an obsidian floor. (The underlying stone layer must be obsidian.)~~

~~2. Build a wall on top of said floor.~~

~~3. Deconstruct wall.~~

~~Resulting floor should have become black sand. (If black sand is already a default soil type of your area. Sigh)~~
~~In my case I constructed an obsidian block wall on the floor, and the floor had been smoothed first, but I don't know if those are necessary. After some testing it is not necessary. Additionally, building a wall on top of a rough, smoothed, or even engraved floor out of any material and then deconstructing it in this fashion appears to have the result of the new floor being a rough floor of the base underlying layer. So I tried it on the bottom level of my fortress sitting on rock and when the wall was deconstructed I had a granite floor in an obsidian fortress. As a note, minerals and metal veins are discounted in this. I built a wall one level above an orthoclase vein on my obsidian and removed it and it became not orthoclase but granite, the base rock of the underlying area. (Sigh) Ignore these ramblings...~~

unfortunately it doesn't work as I'd hoped. I tried it in the other fort with a stone base on the second and third floors and got stone from that strata, ie. gneiss and granite. Nothing resembling sand. Looks like it's an old glitch rediscovered.))

Title: **Re: Dorenemal: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 20, 2008, 04:15:42 pm**

22nd of Limestone

Cerol, one of our weavers, came down with a few mood today, for lack of a better term. He went and immeadiately claimed a clothier's shop and a bolt of Midnight blue Giant Cave spider silk cloth and a few other items and got to work. The result?

Kithen Gareem, the Cactus of Generals, a giant cave spider silk hood. Obviously it menaces with lots of spikes. Though it is worth about 56000 ingots.

((I'm going to take some time out of character here to wish everyone a very

Merry Christmas!

That being said, I'll likely not be posting until, possibly near the end of the year, about a week away. I'm nearing the end of this fortress in the story line now, I really just want to work through some of the plot I've got in my head and get some of the architectural projects done before putting it up for you all to explore.

I've been thinking a lot about the direction this is heading and I'm excited about where it is going. So much so that I can't wait to work on the next parts. In line with this I'd like to not have to wait for responses at a later date so I'll tell you some of what I've got planned for the future.

For the rest of the story line I'll actually be using 40d instead of whatever version I'm currently using. I haven't really wanted to switch it over yet so this will be a clean break from the past world. It'll be incorporated into the story. Additionally I've been looking at mods I'd like to use for the next world and have chosen Capt'n Mayday's Legendary Lands which I think will provide a considerably greater challenge and room for more glory for your characters as well as potential disaster.

My next fortress will be in Legendary lands and I'll have six spots open. I'll reserve four for any dwarves that want to come over from this one and will pick your skills to reflect current experience. (I won't be using DC to modify them into the exact duplicates. That'd make it too easy I think) Two spots will be reserved for any new dwarves that might be interested, though if they're not taken, obviously they can be claimed by currently named dwarves. (Steele, Crush, you're the only ones that've died, you can still fall under the previous dwarf clause and claim one of the four if you'd like. No possessions will be transferred of course.)

All that being said... the sign-ups are now open. Please include name, preferred gender (if possible I'll accomodate but we're not sexist here), background, and any things you'd like me to bring for you specifically. They will be your items to use in-game as you'd like me to. New characters just need name and gender and background.

If this leaves some of you out, don't worry. I'll be getting migrants soon enough to accomodate. Should some of you really really want founders then feel free to put your names on the list for the planned fortress after that... that'll be the third and final chapter of the work and likely of considerably longer duration than the first two, but you'll see why when I get there. There are only room for 5 on the third fortress. And none of them are permitted to be bonecarvers
Spoiler (click to show/hide)
as that position is only open to the clergy.

I will be making this a considerable challenge and trying to incorporate your dwarves into the story line as much as possible. I was considering trying something new in this regards. Sort of a reward system for posting journal entries of your own dwarves as it were. Starting with the second fortress three posts (in-character, at least two or three sentences long) will earn you the right to make a request for your character. (Very large or exceptionally special requests will take six posts.) Let me know what you guys think about this idea over the break.

Positions open for
The Mountain of Safety:6 (4 for those with current dwarves, 2 if not)
Fortress 3 (Name not to be revealed at this time... it's too revealing.): 5 (Whoever, but keep in mind you can only transfer from Fortress 2 if I feel your character would fit into the mood of the third. Requirements to be given at a later date. It will be fittingly macabre.)

Thanks again and happy holidays to you all.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **DarkMagnus** on **December 20, 2008, 09:15:28 pm**

I'm not entirely sure what I need to write for the story, but I'd like Ragnar to accompany Paulus until the current storyline ends, due to Ragnar's distrust of the nobles.

Also, I'll be updating the epic of Sodel Udir soon, and probably starting a community fortress.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **December 20, 2008, 10:03:36 pm**

I'll have Fre move on with you, if that's alright.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 20, 2008, 11:57:30 pm**

((Happy to have you both. Feel free to request an item(s) to take with you. It's up to you, let's say 50 points worth, since I will be taking an anvil, and purchasing you both skills.

Glad to have you both along. It'll make it interesting to use our background history in the storyline. And it's always nice to have a really freakishly talented cook. I promise to incorporate more food into the next one as it's much more diverse in LL.

And DarkMagnus, I really look forward to reading more of Sodel Udir.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Flintus10** on **December 21, 2008, 04:11:16 am**

If it's okay Then I'd like Kolok to come over to the new fort too

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **DarkMagnus** on **December 21, 2008, 03:49:24 pm**

If Ragnar could just keep a decent axe for woodcutting and fighting, that'd be great. Hopefully he can avoid a nervous system injury this time around! Can we get one last look at the character sheets?

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **December 21, 2008, 03:56:40 pm**

All Fre needs
is some seeds.

Oh, and if you have some points left over, the large Heliodor you gave her in the first year would be appreciated.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **December 21, 2008, 04:22:59 pm**

Crush want go with, find and slay many titans! All he'd want is a single microline block, for the stoic shades of microline soothe the fire in his soul.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Kuli** on **December 22, 2008, 07:51:06 pm**

I do believe Crush is *dead*, sonerohi.

I think Kuli Dancetreaties the Tenacious Machine of Lightning will be moving on to other things. I may even try to reuse the character if I ever start my own community fort. While Kuli Problemwalled from Migrursut will always be my favorite, I really doubt he'll be leaving that community fort alive, so Mr. Dancetreaties is the next best thing.

Maybe I'll claim a migrant at some later point when you do the new fort.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **December 22, 2008, 09:00:48 pm**

I do believe zombies are around though, Kuli. We both have Migursut dwarves, so tell me, what exactly is Sgt. Pepper?

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Kuli** on **December 22, 2008, 09:46:08 pm**

But do sentient zombie dwarves exist in Paulus' version of DF?

I forget, which dwarf is yours in Migrursut? I've lost track of almost all of the ones that don't just use their forum names.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **December 22, 2008, 10:08:23 pm**

Mine is Wilbur. He has yet to strike a name due to the fact that hes a low-experience macedwarf. If Heavy Flak didn't use goblins that shot demons from their eyes, my dwarf might actually be fighting stuff. But alas...

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **December 23, 2008, 07:31:37 am**

If possible, Oddbodd the Mechanic might move in.
He was greatly distressed when the Waterbore was abandoned, even more so when he realized that most normal dwarves don't even know what a crumpet is and that brass is generally used as a trade good!
He still pines for the metal halls of Olonkulet.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **December 23, 2008, 03:06:18 pm**

I'd like to claim a dwarf in this new fort. call him Pete, please. profession? um... armoursmith with a bit of blacksmithing thrown in perhaps?

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 24, 2008, 03:30:54 pm**

((Thanks for the responses all. Plans changed a bit due to inclement weather so I'm actually at home for the holidays. In any case, Ragnar, Fre, Kolok, happy to have you continue on in the next section. Crush, you're welcome to come but not as the same character. Crush is irretrievably dead at the moment. If you want another shiftless layabout womanizer by the name of Crush I'm sure I can help you. You'll see soon enough why I'm not accepting zombies at the moment.

Oddbodd and Pete, welcome as well. Mind if I make you a weaponsmith or metalcrafter instead of blacksmith Pete?

This also fills us up for embark, so thanks everyone. Have a safe holidays, and watch out for the stupid people out there. Just think of them as the Urist that goes to retrieve a sock from a dead goblin in the middle of a siege...))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **December 24, 2008, 06:37:08 pm**

((go for it. As long as it mean's i'll get to work with precious gold/silver/steel ;D))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **December 24, 2008, 09:41:11 pm**

Never requested a zombie. Just a dwarf named Crunch. Only reason zombies came up is because Kuli had qualms with my dwarf apparently.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Kuli** on **December 24, 2008, 10:04:00 pm**

I was merely trying to point out that Crush's continued existence would be a blatant continuity error.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **December 25, 2008, 12:56:31 am**

Quote from: Kuli on December 24, 2008, 10:04:00 pm
I was merely trying to point out that Crush's continued existence would be a blatant continuity error.

You'd think that'd be a problem. Then again, look at days of our lives...

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 26, 2008, 03:34:11 pm**

((Not a problem Sonerohi, I'll work a second Crush in. And a microcline block is easy enough to manage.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **December 26, 2008, 04:22:26 pm**

Yaharr! Thank you Paulus.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 29, 2008, 11:11:44 am**

The rich red kaolinite walls around him were silent as he sat at the table in Kashez's shrine, except for the engravings that covered them. Deep in thought the first time the whispered voice came he didn't hear it, but something stirred within him nonetheless. The voice came again and caught his attention but he did not hear what it said. Had someone come to seek him? Less than a dozen even knew of the existence of this place, this hidden sanctuary. Standing he walked into the main worship hall, the Rose-gold statue of their god standing in the center of the room. He looked at the window to see if it had been left open, which may have accounted for the sound but it was secure. Puzzled, Paulus began towards the hall to the secret door hidden in the cliff-side to see if it too were still secure when he heard the voice again from behind him. It called his name.

'Paulus.'

He turned, looking back to the statue and the chest next to it, the assorted artifacts dedicated to Kashez, the Velvety Incense, but no source of sound was visible. The voice had been quiet, but piercing, penetrating his soul so that there was no doubt he had heard.

"What is it? Who is there?" Had someone snuck by him into the crypts and secret treasure room?

'It is I that speak Paulus, come before me.'

It was then that it dawned on him. The statue was the source of the sound. A second realization had him kneeling on one knee before the likeness of his object of worship.

'Seek that which the goblins seek among you. Bring it here that I may show you it's secrets, and mine.'

"Kashez? Is that really you? Am I dreaming?" More questions flooded through him, but no answers were forthcoming.

Silence surrounded him again like a cloak.

It was a disturbing feeling, but he had now much to think about. It would be late before he returned, but the way was safe and secret and he would not be missed before his labors called for him on the morrow.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **December 29, 2008, 12:20:34 pm**

I return to these forums just to late... Could Aardvark be one of the first migrants? And then you could retrain him or use DwarfCompanion to just copy him? Us old guys should stick together and me and Fre has not married still I think. It was a great fortress and may Diamondsense be just as great.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 31, 2008, 04:12:59 pm**

It had been a week since the strange voice had been heard high in the secret alcove of the north-eastern cliffs. It had taken Paulus that long to arrange for the situation of the remaining three goblin prisoners into the small arena they used. There was nothing out of the ordinary about moving them there. Food production workers often tired of hearing and seeing the goblins as they passed from the farms and butcheries into the dining areas.

It was also normal to leave goblins in the arena for long periods of time. It instilled a sense of mortality as few other places could. The obsidian black walls were splattered with the blood and gore of past battles. And though the floor was occasionally cleaned, the smoothed black obsidian never quite lost that red lustre instilled in it after countless bloodlettings.

Paulus, Ragnar and Aardvark were the ones below, with Fre above keeping watch to ensure the galleries were empty. Aardvark worked the levers and watched the lower halls while Paulus and Ragnar went within, locking the doors behind themselves.

After several days of sitting in silence the goblins were offered the best chance they knew they were likely to get. They would have their weapons returned and would get the opportunity to fight Ragnar, The Ragnar. He would be unarmed but fully armored. That alone was an almost irresistible offer, to fight an unarmed enemy with three to one odds. Most prisoners were killed outright and it was unlikely they would get a better chance. The only thing they needed to do?

Provide information.

Two of the speargoblins looked hesitantly at the third, a guard for some signal. The goblin sat and thought for a moment only before speaking:
"We tell you this thing then we fight. Lozu want Mirror of souls."

Both dwarves were silent, one waiting for a cue from the other. He nodded imperceptably and rapped on the door three times and shortly thereafter a quiet grating sound could be heard before the cages sprung open.

Ragnar popped his knuckles audibly as the three goblins warily left their cages, two with spears, one with a mace. One of the speargoblins charged forward trying to impale the stout dwarf before him on his weapon but Ragnar sidestepped it, reaching out and pulling the goblin forward by the spear. The goblin hung on tenaciously as he was dragged withing Ragnar's grip. The dwarf grabbed the creature by it's vest and propelled it bodily into the wall behind them, stunning it and leaving it on the floor face-down. Two swift punches in the back of the head rendered it unconcious and were done with such rapidity that the other two had little chance to act cohesively. He bled to death a short while later due to massive trauma.

The two remaining vainly attempted to circle around and flank Ragnar, but the armored dwarf quickly closed with the other spear-goblin and began crushing him in a bearhug while the guard vainly tried to pound on him but was unable to penetrate the armor in any serious fashion. It was a close matter when the goblin struck a blow from behind in a critical location, but some bruising and bent armor was all that resulted and soon he too faced Ragnar's cold fury.

Giving another series of taps, the door swiftly opened and the four soon left the scene, allowing others to clean up the remaining mess.

By unspoken agreement no questions were asked, but much was thought about, particularly by those who heard what the goblin had said.

Lozu was the name of their demon master, a being of vast power and cunning. It was a name to be feared and respected. The other name none had heard of, nor knew but one of the dwarves there at least had some good guesses as to what it could be that they searched for. Paulus thanked his friends and retired to his public office to think. He couldn't afford to let his public work slip, but an internal change like this was likely to be questioned unless a plausible cause could be offered. One simply didn't steal an artifact displayed so prominently without attracting attention. At least, not easily.

((Can do Aardvark. I'll see to it.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **January 02, 2009, 03:11:26 pm**

Thanks, what is he up to nowadays then?

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 05, 2009, 01:27:33 pm**

((Well, things should be settling back into their normal rhythm here soon and I'll be able to continue working on the fortress so this'll be the last of the catch-up/story. I've written up to where I've played, though I have a lot planned still that you'll be able to read.

Aardvark, right now you're officially the Captain of the Guard and one of our legendary champions. Of course, come the next fort all this will change and I'll be able to get you working on armor again. I'll make sure you don't go legendary in combat this next time. ;)

Oh, and I think he has about thirty or forty named kills.))

I've had Bembul announce the new construction project for the waterfall viewing area and statuary. We're expanding it and the statuary accompanying it and dedicating it to Egul, goddess of water, inspiration, poetry and painting as well as persuasion. Bembul is pleased we're including an area of worship for his goddess and even Dresdor was roused from his ranting for long enough to nod, before going back to work on statues for his goddess. It will be a very pleasing area for dwarves to relax in.

More importantly, it will have some green glass windows installed around the falls themselves to prevent any 'accidents' like the one that nearly killed Melonius so long ago. This will give me an opportunity to remove Lukavog Alnis ug, the grey chalcedony artifact that I believe is known to the goblins. There is little else that I find that fits the description or name provided by the prisoners. I'll have it removed to Kashez's sanctuary so that I can examine it in detail there. I've been to see it and for some reason I still find it oddly disturbing, almost ... well, perhaps it's best that I not be too specific, lest this be seen. In this way though, I hope to allay concerns about having it removed from public viewing. There will be a great shuffling of artifacts as the temples are completed and I hope to have it disappear in the shuffle.



Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 06, 2009, 04:51:40 pm**

((Finally I can access all my files and computer again! I've posted a picture of Egul's shrine on the previous post and some of your info Aardvark. You're also a Legendary shield user.))

2nd of Timber

Lolor, our ever efficient clerk, has given birth to a girl.

Also, the shrines are complete as it were. Kashez's shrine makes my heart glow with pride, but I fear it must remain hidden for the time being to any that are not worshippers. I've had several items worked on specifically for it and it would not do for comparison to be made. Even the queen would be jealous of the riches I've used for such a small place.

Not to mention the purloining of an artifact or five.

I've been able to observe the gemstone window up close now, and despite the uneasy feelings I get whenever I look into it, I've noticed that the flies that are graven into it move. It's a very peculiar thing, and most disturbing is that when I touch it the flies slowly begin creeping towards my hand. It's always been a thing to look at and not touch when it was on display and I suspect that it's creator has no knowledge of this particular aspect of it. I begin to wonder though.



Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **January 07, 2009, 04:55:18 am**

Good to know that he won't be helping the queen. Fahlstrom forever.

Aardvarks Journal

I have heard rumblings about something that is supposed to happen. I do not know what it is or why, but things have not been the same since the royalty arrived. I got a bad feeling about how the fortress is becomming, especialy when Ragnar got imprissoned. Sending one of our greatest heroes, and one of my mot trusted friends, in jail for something he couldn't even have done is unacceptable. I think I'll see Paulus and ask him to join me for a drink later, but I must have a talk with the boys abut how we treat our heroes here.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 08, 2009, 03:26:40 pm**

Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom, undated.

Aardvark came to speak to me today about the disturbing trend he has been noticing at our home. Officially he calls it ... disrespect. What else he said about certain nobility I'll not repeat here. This isn't the first time I've heard it, or felt that way myself. Ragnar's imprisonment particularly rankles, as he's one of the founders of this place. I know Agna's behind this and I assured Aardvark I'd done what I could to rectify the situation. Ragnar had a good bed, food and drink a plenty down there, and with a small stockpile of drink being set up there soldiers from his squads have taken to 'having a break' with their mate. It's not uncommon to see three or four down there at almost any given time, but I understand what it's like to be chained.

I also did what I could, short of treasonous acts, to get back at Agna. It's really a small matter, more of an inconvenience, but I know of his wife's dislike of rats. So I coaxed our two tame ones out of their cages and released them into his quarters when no one was looking. They've been around for years, and that was back when I was keeping the books, so I doubt that anyone is aware of their existance even. I hope they chew through his clothing. Any more overt actions would be seen as action against the Queen as well, and a traitor I'm not, despite not seeing eye-to-eye with her. Making Agna's life a living nightmare one small inconvenience at a time... now that's reasonable.

After our drink I brought Aardvark down to the new area I'd been having worked on as well as the other projects. For lack of a better term I call it our Hall of Champions.



The two southern-most statues were likenesses of Ragnar, Urvad and Aardvark, though I'd hope the sarcophagi wouldn't be needed any time soon. I knew as well that Aardvark was fond of silver. All burial receptacles were made of steel and decorated accordingly. His was a finely built steel sarcophagus had been set with masterfully worked silver spikes, placed in a precision pattern and nearly needle sharp, courtesy of our resident metalcrafter. Nothing says, 'Don't mess with the dead' like spikes on coffins. All the metalsmithing work here had been done by Lord Rovod, who'd made a decent likeness of Aardvark himself in a silver statue. I'd had our gemsmith work in something special as well. Aardvark's eyes had been encrusted onto the statue with blue diamond and sparkled even in the dim lighting of our lantern. I didn't tell him that the value of both items was more than some dwarves ever owned, it simply wasn't necessary.

Aardvark grew silent as he admired the workdwarfship of both and shortly thereafter we left the place in silence. The halls for the dead tended to have that effect.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 08, 2009, 08:01:39 pm**

13th of Obsidian

Paulus brushed the snow off of his armor idly as he ascended the steps to his sacred secret. It was a vain guesture, as he hadn't had time of late to clean off his gear either, and the mud, blood and vomit splattered liberally across it merely smeared as he brushed at it. He grinned in spite of the grime as he approached the statue depiction of his god, nodding reverentially as he entered.

His table and chair where he wrote and read were ready to record what he hoped to find out, but were unneeded as of yet. Striding over to the window, Lukavog Alnis ud, a grim sense of foreboding filled him, as it always did. He wondered, not for the first time, at the feeling of ... uncleanness that came from it. But he was determined this time to try what he had been summoning up the courage to do. He removed his gauntlet as he approached and hesitantly placed his bare hand on the window.

And he waited.

Ever so slowly the minute carvings of flies gathered around his warm flesh until a ridge around his hand could be seen. It was always here that he had removed his hand before, the ominous impressions lending credence to believed ills. But still he waited. He gasped as small pains filled his hand and palm, as if a hundred tiny cuts had been opened at once, but he saw no blood and only felt the pain.

Pain... that was something he could relate to. Life was filled with pain, of all sorts, and this wasn't the worst he had felt. After Mistem's beating, very little would be able to match that level of pure agony.

And still he waited, watching the small flies congregate. Then slowly he noticed that the window was changing color, or rather, becoming clear, rather than the slight grey translucence caused by the chalcedonies used in it's construction.

He had expected to still be looking out over the valley, shown in his other windows, but no such thing was to be seen. Instead, he saw his home, his fortress from a vantage that could only have been a birds-eye view, and was diminishing rapidly in the distance. Suddenly the window was looking into a room, illuminated only in the center so that all walls gave the impression of being lost in blackness, with a rose-gold throne in the center of it. An aged-looking dwarf sat on the throne, clothed in a silver mantle. His white beard hung down to his belt, and was tucked into it. As he looked up, our eyes met, his deep grey orbs conveying a timelessness that was not visible looking upon his body.

"I see you have found your way to me at last Paulus. I was wondering how long it would take you to figure it out.

I am Kashez, the Velvety Incense, as I believe you may have guessed.

Long have I guessed that you would be counted worthy to stand before us. Your creation of Sirablimur Idithkor has not gone unnoticed, nor the order that radiates from both it and you as a result of that creation.

Much have we to talk about, but now that we have spoken once, it shall be easier to speak again. For now, I would tell you more of that which has been wrought in the window which you use. Lukavog was created, I suspect, out of the long-forgotten racial memory which you all still possess but cannot access ordinarily. At the beginning of the age in which you exist the original mirror was created. By the demons was it made, out of black diamond and the bones of a slain foe. Sight it gave to them, terrible and prophetic, far beyond their ordinary powers of vision and we knew it had to be destroyed.

We, the immortal gods and our immortal allies are locked in deady war. Good against evil if you will, those those are subject to interpretation, but rather Order agaist Chaos. We, beings of order, pitted against the raw forces of Chaos since the beginning of time. Always it has been an ebb and flow of struggle, though, admittedly, chaos has often had the upper hand.

This creation of theirs was a new weapon against us and we were too closely watched by it's creators to get close. Prescience has it's weaknesses, and looking too intently often causes oversights in other areas. It was your kind, you dwarves that led to it's capturing and destruction, if destruction can be said of it. Perhaps that was why this likeness of it was created again, though less sinister by far than the original it still serves a similar, though equally lesser purpose.

Use it to see, you may, though cost you it will, and what you see is often clouded by that which is unseen or unguessed. I suspect this cannot show the future like the original could, though it's use in the present is still great.

I leave you now to it to experiment with, though I warn you, to be careful. Forces there still are which know of it, and which can find it should you look for them as well."

The images shifted as Paulus stepped back to think and the window quickly grew grey again, showing the natural scenery behind it once more. A faint bloodstain where his hand rested quickly disappeared and the flies resumed a more natural configuration. Looking down at his palm and hand the blood quickly slowed it's flow, though several drips found the floor before he gruffly wiped it off on his greaves and went to his desk to write. He indeed had much to cover and it would be dark ere he left.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 09, 2009, 07:23:08 pm**

21st of Obsidian

He surveyed the frozen forest and lakes around the base of the southern tower before allowing himself a small smile. Dwarves were still flowing up and down the ramp, despite the chill weather and the deep drifts. The solid granite walls had only had their foundations laid months ago and they were nearing completion, at least on the ground floor. More height could always be added later, but the ten feet high walls were nearly twice that thick and made out of cut granite, fitted to perfection. The iron gates had yet to be re-installed at their new location, but that was a small matter. Ragnar's squad and Fath's squad were on duty below, chatting amongst themselves while trying to keep warm. No trouble had been seen as of yet and it was hoped that would remain so until after the walls were complete and the gates hung.

It was sufficient for him today as he slipped out of where the gates were to go and up the dusty ill-used stairs that had been carved to allow passage from the lower plateau to the middle one. Slipping through a secret door hidden in the rock and protected by a retractible elevated bridge he made his way into the safe areas of the cliff-side, securing the way behind him as he went. Another turning brought him to a second set of stairs hidden in the cliffs that he used to enter his secret shrine, removing his cloak with a shake and stamping his feet to get the snow off of himself.

Paulus hung his cloak on the chair as he sat and looked at his journal again on the table. It was nearly full, and he would have to get another book here soon. But today that wasn't his greatest concern as he again approached the grey-chalcedony window. He'd only used the artifact once or twice, and with great trepidation each time, but it had proven true. He'd been able to see the areas surrounding their fortress with great clarity. Perhaps now it was time to put it to a greater test. It was time to see what his enemies were up to.

A quick incision on his forearm opened a bright welling of blood that he used to coat a portion of the window and he watched the flies approach it hungrily. He shuddered inwardly. Not idly he wondered what price the original construction cost the users, and thinking on those grim thoughts he found himself looking out across a great temple, constructed out of stone, but not made by dwarven hands. The workmanship was clearly goblin in nature, with carvings and engravings like those his own people made. It was not the first time he had been drawn here, and he knew what he would see next, though not why. In one corner of the temple was a masterful engraving of the very window he looked through now, and he could almost see he own image staring out of it. He noted in passing a new engraving that had escaped him the first time, that of Ivoryconfined and he wondered why in a goblin temple those two artifacts would have been carved.

But this time he was drawn further down, and figures came into view. The corpses of five dwarves were laid out in a star pattern on the ground floor of the temple and inside it was a figure unlike any he'd seen before. She looked up and met his eyes as his vision drew closer, as if she too could see him. That alone nearly caused him to draw back and flee this vision. Those piercing red eyes bore into him, and only faintly did he note the rest of her figure, covered in tough red skin, almost scaly in nature. Small twin horns jutted from her hairline where a silky black hair fell to her shoulders. Wings were folded back behind her and still she stood as tall as any two dwarves together.

She smiled, her perfectly white teeth an odd contrast to her hungry mouth.

"You should not have returned."

She smiled again, almost disarmingly as she held up her hands. They were empty.

"I am Lozu. Leader of the Spider of Union and Ruler of the Curses of Assaulting. Witness my glory, mortal, and fear!"

He swallowed in spite of himself. He knew now what he was seeing. It was a demoness, one of the immortal creations that had walked the land since the beginning. This must be the goblin capitol, Dutymenaced.

"You will not find what you seek here, foolish dwarf. In fact, I very much doubt that you should find it in time at all."

She laughed a sinister laugh before continuing.

"No, my brother and his pet priestess have already begun preparations for the Great Unbinding. I am somewhat disappointed in you, though. I had seen the creation of the Mirror of Souls mere days after it was made, and only now do you begin to grasp it's use. I needn't have wasted my forces after all. But such mistakes are trivial in the long run. The war will begin anew, and this time we shall not be so easily thwarted.

Before I leave you, know this... though I am demon I have not survived unshackled this long through sheer force of arms. My weapons are cunning and treachery, and they come now for you and yours, though cloaked they may be.

Now, here is my parting present!"

With this final crescendo of sound she waved her arms in a guessture as flames erupted around her, consuming the bodies and illuminating the area brightly enough that her finger was only barely visible through the shimmer, pointing at him. He heard a crackling as darkness engulfed the window and himself and he fell and knew no more for a time.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 10, 2009, 01:43:02 pm**

18th of Moonstone Winter

It took me over a week to recover from the last ordeal with the attempt at sight, and since then I've used it only once, and that carefully. I shall take care not to become dependant on it for insight, as that would be a crutch worse than not knowing. In any case, it remains true that some dangers one simply does not know how to look for.

A goblin patrol ambushed one of our woodcutters on the upper ramp as he was going to trim the verde as it were around the outside of our upper walls. He had the sense to run back a little ways and made his stand at the line of traps. It's possible that one or two goblins escaped him, but we took no losses, thankfully. Because of that threat however patrols were sent out to the east and south-east as well. One of our engineers working on the gate actually discovered a goblin snatcher and along with a mason did their best to subdue it. They managed to break it's leg but were themselves injured in the process and forced to flee. I was able to provide support for them and went and finished off the creature that was lapsing in and out of conciousness.

Fath managed to corner another trying to sneak in the eastern gates as well. With us on the alert I doubt they'll try more at this time and as soon as the gate is finished I've ordered them shut for the winter.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **ricemastah** on **January 10, 2009, 10:47:50 pm**

That was a long read. But I am glad I finished it, and I have to say that it is great writing man!

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 12, 2009, 03:51:02 pm**

Fortress records, 21st of Moonstone, 1062

The accused, one Paulus Fahlstrom entered the meeting hall accompanied by four Royal guard and the Hammerer, one Mistem of Dorenemal at shortly after sun-down, on this day of Winter.

...

The guards looked somewhat nervous as the escorted the 'accused' to the room. Only Mistem seemed calm, if slightly resigned. As they entered, way was made through the small crowd of dwarves that was growing by the minute as word spread. The onlookers seemed more curious at the moment, as such a trial was rare enough. Trials were generally only reserved for dwarven leadership or nobles, and where charges were brought forward by another in such position. Charges were to be stated in trial by the accuser and the Judicar, typically the Hammerer, or, where no such person existed, the Captain of the guard, presided over the trial and weighed the cases. It wasn't uncommon for the 'ranking' dwarf to be given the benefit of the doubt in some cases and with Agna sitting on the accuser's side many of the onlookers knew who that would be.

Mistem looked out over the gathered assembly. The Queen was conspicuously absent, but Mistem understood her role well enough in this instance to proceed, calling for silence.

"Be it formally known that this is the trial of Paulus Fahlstrom and that he is the accused. The accuser is Lord Agna, Advisor to the Queen. Stand and recognize the chair."

Agna stood and bowed stiffly to Mistem, a slight smirk obscured beneath his beard. Paulus likewise stood and bowed to Mistem, one eyebrow raised as if in thought, or perhaps reflection on the character of the Judicar. The guards behind him remained tense, hands on weapons until he sat again.

"Then let this trial officially begin. The fortress clerk will keep record of the proceedings. Lord Agna, you may lay out the charges that you have."

"Very well. My charges then are thus: That He, "the word was spat out with considerable venom", is guilty of treason, sedition and neglect."

A shocked silence filled the hall as the murmur of other dwarves ceased upon his pronouncement. Those were black accusations indeed. A low undercurrent of rumblings began shortly thereafter, a dissatisfied and angry noise on many sides and equally vociferous response.

Mistem looked down her nose at Agna, almost disapprovingly. "State the incidents of his crimes and the evidence against him, if you please Lord Agna."

"We have evidence of transactions that he brokered during his time here with the humans a vast amount of material designed to aid their forces in combat, when at the same time he neglected to ship similar supplies to our own forces in contradiction to royal decree. In addition we believe him to be in collusion with humans to effect a barter of undisclosed services in exchange for vast amounts of wealth. And lastly, his crimes against me personally are those of neglect, for while under his jurisdiction he furnished my, and my family so poorly that steps had to be repeatedly taken to raise the standards up to those fitting my station."

A pent up anger had built up inside Paulus as he heard the false and inflammatory accusations but the last one was too much as he stood and spat.

"The minimum wouldn't be the minimum if it wasn't good enough. Don't you dare accuse me of neglect you..."

Mistem brought her hammer down on the table with a crack that resounded throughout the hall. Sternly she looked at Paulus before saying:

"Silence. You shall have your time to defend yourself. Be quiet or I shall have you removed from the proceedings and conduct them in your absence."

Such threats were to be taken seriously as they almost inevitably meant losing the trial and he sat.

"You may continue, Lord Agna. What evidences have you?"

He brought forward a heavy sheaf of papers and Lolor, the clerk, looked apologetically at Paulus before returning to her recording.

"These are the transaction records for the fortress at the time of his brokerage. As for the charges of sedition, I believe he carries on his person a ring, given him by a human merchant prince, a sign of their goodwill and intent."

Paulus' head snapped up from thought at the mention of the ring. He hadn't been aware that any others knew of it, and quickly wondered who had spied it on the fine silver chain around his neck that he kept tucked into his armor.

The Judicar, one eyebrow raised, looked at Paulus. "Have you such a ring in your possession? Show it to the court if you please."

Paulus knew he could refuse, but it would only mean having his person and rooms searched, and that might reveal more than he cared to have revealed. Compliance would be better in this case. Drawing out the shiny whitish metal band from around his neck he brought it forward to show Mistem. Her eyes widened slightly as she recognized it for what it was, a band of contract. Such bands were rare, and few dwarves had ever seen one, fewer still had been given one.

Her voice came out as a subdued whisper, in striking contrast to the unruly clamor of the crowds.

"For what have you been given this band, Paulus. What are the conditions of the agreement?"

"Those I will not disclose, they are not mine to reveal. I can only give my word that they are not seditios in nature," he looked acidly at Lord Agna, standing in his finery" nor that with them harm shall come to my clan nor my people."

Mistems eyes closed as she thought briefly, then she nodded.

"Very well, continue Lord Agna."

He scowled, before continuing.

"Evidence of neglect is easy enough to prove, and my wife could testify of it as well, should it be necessary, but I give my word that it has been the case." He smirked slightly, looking pointedly at Paulus. He had called the cards well. He knew it would likely come down to his word against Paulus', but that was good enough, concrete proof of wrong-doing had proven damnably elusive, and even the records he'd obtained would only show that the letter of the law had been followed, if not the spirit.

Mistem's expression was unreadable as she nodded and looked at Paulus.

"The accused may defend themselves if they so wish."

Paulus stood slowly and nodded. In a booming voice he proclaimed:

"I invoke the right of Okil Zoluth!"

Mistem smiled ever so slightly and nodded. Agna grew white, though whether it was from fear or rage it was hard to tell. Whispers and agitated conversation went through the crowd again. The trial of combat hadn't been invoked in the last four decades and was an often perilous choice. It also conveyed sometimes a sense of neither outright denial nor of acceptance that the charges were just. If killed the accused would still be buried honorably in accordance with combat customs. If victorious the charges would be dropped. Often this resulted in the accuser being called out in a duel afterwards. Perhaps that was what had Agna concerned.

A crack resounded throughout the hall again as Mistem brought conversation to a halt with her hammer, the smoothed obsidian surface of the table showing some signs of flaking, common to the rock when struck.

"I remind you all that I carry the authority of the Queen herself in this trial." A subtle statement that. "Due to the natures of the accusations the accuser, rather than the Judicar, will be given the duty of selecting the trial. Lord Agna, it is upon you to find a ... suitable champion for your cause. "

Agna's look soured. Perhaps he knew that few of the soldiers would be willing to risk their lives for such a trial.

"If it must be so. I shall begin my search and contact you when a suitable choice has been made."

Mistem nodded. Then rapped her hammer thrice on the table.

"Let this trial then be adjourned until such a time as shall be indicated."

Lord Agna quickly gathered his sheaves of paper and left hurriedly, to many mutters from the crowd. Mistem stood and walked over to Paulus.

"You are free to go. We'll contact you when the remainder of your trial has been arranged. You are not free to leave the area and doing so will be considered admission of guilt. Good luck to you."

Paulus smiled and nodded.

"Don't worry. I won't leave, not when there's still fun to be had here." Then growing quickly serious he said. "And I thank you Lady Judicar, for your time... and your advice."

"I was merely conveying what her Majesty wanted me to pass on to you regarding our legal system. Do not abuse it."

Paulus nodded.

"Then good day, fellow dwarf."

"Good day to you too Mistem. I was almost looking forward to some time alone with you again."

She laughed as she left. "Don't worry, that may happen again soon enough if you keep things up."

That crypt realy looked great. Your writing is still exeptional, and this trial is very exiting. Keep it up.

25th of Moonstone

I hate this waiting game. To be honest, I'd much rather simply be done with things one way or another. In any case, Agna has not, nor is he likely to, find a dwarf to champion his cause here. Many of the talented fighters wouldn't choose to fight me of their own accord, but I hear Ragnar and Urvad let it be known that any that do consider accepting, should they survive, will suffer some sort of 'training' accident at their hands. Considering the both of them, this is not an idle threat. Even I wouldn't want a sparring match with Urvad where I knew she was trying to kill me.

Draco has been consumed lately by the creative bug. He's been muttering about work on an item he says, existed nearly seven hundred years ago. I suspect he's possessed, but he's claimed a smithy and has begun gathering his components. One of them is a lump of raw clear glass. That will have to be made and it may take a little while. It still promises to be nice, whatever it is, even if he's making it out of tin.

4th of Opal, Winter.

I was in the southern tower directing construction again when I heard the call to alarm. Most of the dwarves around me simply continued their work, they were on duty and it wasn't proper to abandon their work without cause, though I noticed many dour faces. They wouldn't get to see any action. As I was leaving the hall I began hearing a dull pounding sound and paused. That wasn't normal for goblins. As I entered the main hall things quickly began to look disorderly, many dwarves had been in the meeting hall eating or drinking and were attempting to take their food up to the roof to see what was going on. The guard was dashing about trying to maintain order. In the midst of this chaos Mistem strode calmly through the throngs of bodies, heading for me. I suspected then that it was going to be an interesting day. Perhaps my last.

The bronze colossus pressed on heedless of the cries of dwarves in the tower in front of it. That was not it's concern. It's way had been barred and this fortress was responsible. It would do what it had been designed to do.

Destroy.

Lord Rovod looked out over the fortifications at the construct, reducing a bolt-hole door made of solid granite to rubble. He could recall the markings he'd seen on it, without a doubt. Such things had been passed on to him as part of his training as Dungeon Master.

He shook his head, dispelling nostalgic thoughts of days spent in the company of other noble children, many of them his friends, most of them his rivals. The Queen stood next to him, head cocked, waiting for his response to her question and trying hard to hear it over the massive booming of the creation at work.

"Fell beasts, indeed." he muttered to himself.

"Aye, I recognize them. That is Ilaya Iranicace, also known as Ultras mouldered. Such things were more common in ages past, the siege weapons of ancient armies animated by foul sorcery, or so our legends maintain."

The Queen whirled her advisor, giving him a harsh and accusatory look.

"You take too much liberty sometimes, Agna. You know of my plans for him."

The advisor shrugged. "I have been in service to your family for nearly a hundred years, my Queen. I've seen such people come and go. To be honest, I never thought you had much chance of persuading him. He is simply far too different from us. Trust me, it's better this way."

She gave him another disapproving look before turning back to the loud booming of bronze fists on the solid iron gates. Gates that were beginning to dent and warp.

"All I need to find is the right lever. Anything can be moved with the proper application of force and a long enough lever. You had better hope you are right though, for your sake."

He swallowed hard and turned to witness the scene, merely another dwarf in the crowd. Separated by guards of course, but still, a crowd that could quickly become unruly as well.

Paulus approached the gate as the booming continued, remarkably calm at the choices he had made. If this was to be his trial by combat then so be it. He got in position and signalled, raising his sword up so the defenders would see. Ragnar and Aardvark had given him the honor of lining up the military and giving him a final salute as he left, twin aisles of steel as he walked through the gates, perhaps for the last time. It was a symbolic gesture, and he knew they would only come to his aid after he had lost or won. By law they weren't allowed to interfere before then.

Then the gates before him dropped into the stone with a scraping of metal and he had sight of his opposer. The dull bronze had been tarnished with age except around intricate runes that still had the metal gleaming. It was an odd contrast, this dappling, and it occurred to him then that it was possible that he would not survive this fight. That the fifteen foot behemoth made of solid brass standing before him would undo him. But such fatalistic views did not last long as a fury welled up within him at the wrongs that he had suffered, the trials caused by Agna and circumstance. He would give his all to this fight, win or lose. He took a step forward and that broke the momentary silence. The colossus began moving as well, heading for him, an armored behemoth trying to squish a pest.

It's arm swung round as they closed, and nearly took him in the side full force had he not dodged back out of the way. A second blow punched down as he tried to return blows, sizing up his opponent. His sword bounced off the hardened metal, nicking it slightly, and he was forced to dodge again, the blow striking the road with enough force to rattle the stones around him. It had him apparently pinned between it and the wall now and tried to take advantage of it by attempting to bowl into him, but a quick dodge and roll put him out of it's way as it struck the wall with a crash, falling down in the process.

Paulus was on it in a flash, his sword leaping out to strike repeatedly on exposed areas, a nick here a cut there, but most seemed to deflect off the smooth metal surfaces. As it tried to rise a strong blow took it into the leg, steel cutting into the metal slightly, sinking in almost an inch. Another blow took it from behind in the lower torso, nearly catching the sword in the deep cut. It was then he realized it was not a normal foe he was dealing with. This thing felt no pain. It could not be killed.

But that thought, though negative was not without hope and he realized that this was no living thing he could wound. This was a machine, or like one. And one did not kill a machine.

One dismantled them.

It stood fully, turning to him again, little worse for the wear, magic playing over it's body as some of the smaller nicks began to close, the ancient magics taking hold. They charged each other again, the dwarf scoring a massive gash in the creatures head as it swung down to strike, taking out it's eye and cutting into it's ear deeply. But the blow was not without cost and the fist swung in, catching the dwarf in mid turn flat in the chest. Were it not for the sturdy steel plate protecting him it would have caved in his chest. As it was the blow

knocked him sprawling, a massive dent in his armor with likely a few broken ribs. Blood splattered the ground as he stood and coughed out a small spray of it. No good sign that.

On the north tower the onlooker watched in hushed silence, the trio of dwarves betraying emotions at the scene, Lord Rovod frowning, the Queen ambivalent while Agna watched with an almost eager smile.

The dueling pair charged again, the dwarf ducking down low as the blow of the bronze colossus passed over his head, and he struck back forcefully. His blow cut deep into the creatures leg, and the forces upon it caused it to begin to crack. The colossus turned and tried to step into him but the critically injured leg collapsed underneath it, spilling it into the snow.



The dwarf was on it in a flash, hacking and cutting at joints, areas of weakness as the creation tried to rise despite it's loss. Paulus cut into it's hand that it was using to push itself up, cutting deeply into it and splaying it wide, leaving a gash through the middle of it. Still it inexorably rose and he was forced to dodge away again. But it was slowing, and that had been it's weakness all along. It simply couldn't keep up with the agile dwarf as he continued to rain blows upon it.

Freed from the extreme need to dodge Paulus struck it a mighty blow to the chest, overbalancing it and sending it flying back to strike the wall again. It fell to the ground again, and again no mercy was shown as the sword cut in, slicing deep into the head, cutting here into the upper arm, there into the leg, searching for flaws it could exploit. The colossus struggled to rise but a final blow to the lower torso where it had already been damaged severed the upper and lower bodies.

A second later the runes covering it began increasing in brightness until a blinding white light emanated from the spot and waves of heat began melting the snow, sending up a steam cloud enveloping the two fighters. When the cold knife wind finally cut through the steam two figures could still be seen, a clean and unfrozen section of road in a circle around them. One standing, struggling for breath, but victorious. The other laying perfectly inert, not a sign of the runes nor ancient magics gracing the strangely intact and masterfully wrought bronze statue.



Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **January 15, 2009, 04:32:14 pm**

Brilliant. Absolutely Brilliant. One of the best megabeast encounter write-ups I've seen. I'd just like to say, I love this story.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 16, 2009, 03:59:28 pm**

I've been laid up again in bed, though, admittedly, being a hero and in bed is better than being a criminal and in bed. Not that it makes that much of a difference in food quality. Fre cooks pretty much everything our fort consumes and does an absolutely incredible job of it. I'd say she's married to the kitchen, but Aardvark might take exception to that.

I've been running the construction with the aid of Bembul, and it continues well apace. But mostly I'm recording the births of a son to Udib the guard, as well as a son to Urvad. I seriously have no idea when she is going to stop, but I'm truly amazed that the mother of at least eight can manage a full time teaching/training program for the military. While carrying an infant. Or two.

Truly an astounding feat.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 20, 2009, 07:15:02 pm**

17th of Obsidian

It's been less than a week since the Queen has given birth to a son, and already I've been visited by her. For my dispatching of the collossus I've been officially cleared of any crimes I may or may not have comitted.

She's also said that I may ask of her a boon, and were it in her power she would grant it to me.

I asked her if my duties as founder of Dorenemal had been completed and if I were released from my responsibilities here. She seemed taken aback by that question but replied affirmatively before asking what that had to do with it. She understands me so very poorly I cannot begin explaining it, but I have felt a growing desire in my mind to leave this place and the slow-rot that seems to have set in among the populace. I dare not say so aloud, nor make any actions in that direction until I'm better able to travel. It's not like I can simply leave and assume that my wounds will magically heal themselves as soon as I depart. That would be ludicrous.

In our conversation the Queen had suggested that she was less than happy with her advisor Agna, as well as with her general, and seemed, to me, to suggest that I consider taking up the post as military advisor to the crown. Her language seemed to intimate that such would be well within the limitations of the boon.

On a darker note, I've thought much about that conversation and can only suspect that she had another train of thought lined up with that. That were I to seek revenge against Agna and challenge him, she wouldn't stand in the way, but that she would also consider me filling his, presumably, vacant position. That thought alone has kept me awake for some time at night while I heal. The possibility of exacting revenge on him for what he has done to us all calls to me, but I see the dangers in it as well. Such actions would put me in her service, as advisor, as well as in her debt.

And while I lie here I think of the good I could accomplish, as advisor to the Queen, and what could be done to benefit the dwarven kingdom, but I see the nature of that lie. Nations and laws do not change so quickly, nor with ease, and the advisor is still subject to the intentions of the monarchy. I fear that such an offer would be little more than a gilded cage. One that she would use to make me into little more than her pet.

I fear such action to be futile. There is only one true course remaining for me, that of departure. Were I to stay I risk the contrivances of Agna, whom I cannot kill lest I fall into that trap I mentioned, but so doubly must I spurn any machinations of the Queen, who would undoubtedly turn on me eventually and my life would be in jeopardy.

The manner of departure, of necessity, must be sudden, with few, if any, knowing of it. My question to Zuglar about my duty was a much as I could risk of it, but I could not leave my duty here unserved. It was something that I felt I simply had to ensure was fulfilled.

There is, of course, the matter of me still being bed-ridden, but I heal well, and hope to soon be quit of this bed.

And the temple to Avuz must be finished. That is a matter which weighs heavily on my mind of late as the final state of things swims in my thoughts even as I dream.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 21, 2009, 01:18:10 pm**

1st of Granite 1064, first official day of Spring

The annual tradition of celebrating our founding continues, albeit without speeches and acknowledgements. I thought I'd take the time to go over some paperwork while lying here, and gave Lolor the week off so I could get back into the books for a bit. In any case, things here are going well. I'll include a summary of fortress statistics below. We continue to have an inordinate amount of children here. I'm not sure if that is normal or not. I certainly can't recall having that many back at Kilrudmorul.

Dwarf Fortress									
Mountainhome Dorenemal, "Diamondsense"					1st Granite, 1064, Early Spring				
Animals		Kitchen		Stone		Stocks		Prices	
Currency		Justice							
Created Wealth:		6438255*		Population:		234		Leader @ Consort @	
Weapons:		64260*		Miners		@ 6		Champions	
Armor and Garb:		1794604*		Woodworkers		@ 4		Axe Lords	
Furniture:		367830*		Stoneworkers		@ 20		Swordsdwarves	
Other Objects:		1903345*		Rangers		@ 2		Swordmasters	
Architecture:		967177*		Metalsmiths		@ 2		Macedwarves	
Displayed:		398296*		Jewelers		@ 3		Mace Lords	
Held/Worn:		942743*		Craftsdwarves		@ 14		Hammerdwarves	
Imported Wealth:		532970*		Nobles/Admins		@ 9		Hammer Lords	
Exported Wealth:		563675*		Peasants		@ 3		Speardwarves	
Food Stores:		3530		Children		@ 61		Spearmasters	
Meat		None		Fishery Workers		@ 1		Marksdwarves	
Fish		None		Farmers		@ 26		Elite Mrksdwrvs	
Plant		142		Engineers		@ 9		Wrestlers	
Seeds		427		Trained Animals		A None		Elite Wrestlers	
Drink		688		Other Animals		A 18		Recruits	
Other		2273							

((Fre, that OTHER category of food... that's all you and your awesome meals.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 22, 2009, 01:39:12 pm**

9th of Granite

Much to my dismay the Queen has continued to be obstinate in regards to the elves. She ordered the gates to remain shut through spring, by royal decree.

It was with dismay then that shortly after the elvish ambassador arrived that I heard the cry go out:

Ambush!

One of our watch had spotted the goblins coming from the east as they waylaid the elvish ambassador and slew him in front of our very gates. A second and third group of goblins appeared in time for the elven merchants to arrive and they too were killed. I do not know if any of them survived to flee, but I doubt it. What has the Queen done?

I cannot at the same time wonder if this obstinance of hers is aimed at me to a small degree as well. Though I was by no means an elf-friend, I tried to maintain amiable relations with them, and that was reasonably well known. Perhaps she thinks to persuade me to take on the advisory post by such blatantly disrespectful action. I do not know for sure, and likely will not.

Thankfully I am feeling somewhat better already and should be fully recovered in a few more days time.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 23, 2009, 07:22:59 pm**

25th of Felsite Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

I've had precious little time of late to write in here, but progress of the temple to Avuz goes well. It is with considerable eagerness that I've been overseeing the final stages and we've kept all the metalworkers very busy. The top two floors of the temple are crafted entirely out of metal. It's truly a magnificent structure and the furnishings are beginning to be put into place. Lord Rovod has been working around the clock on statues and furniture. The main worship hall has seating for around thirty to fourty and standing room for about the same number. Most of the chairs are made out of our finest steel, except those in the back which are made out of well crafted granite. The head-cleric's chair is pure gold and is flanked by two platinum statues. The floor and walls are iron and the roof is silver. A floor above it is the reliquary and statue garden, with statues from the representative metals of our area, the walls are gold and the roof is also made of platinum, and the main entrance is here. The top floor is platinum, bordered with gold, with two large platinum altars laid on the souther end. All the borders of the room housing the temple are engraved with much of our history. I feel compelled to record some of the beauty of this place in words and seal up my journal as this is now the last page.

I am Paulus Fahlstrom, Founder of Dorenemal and dwarf of the Big Knife Tribe. This book shall be placed in the sacred chest in the hidden shrine of Kashez, which will be sealed. The artifacts contained therein shall remain hidden, as they pose too much of a danger to those who might use it among us. Our enemies must breach our defenses to get to it, and even then it is unlikely they will think to search so far from our main dwellings here. And to think that this place was once a goblin stronghold.

I go now to the north and east, to pay my respects to my kindred dead at Kilrudmorul. The journey will take the better part of a year and a half to get there, and I do not know if I will survive. The mountains between here and there are wild and full of dangers, which we have long since forgotten about in our calm little corner of the world. I fear dire things are soon to be happening, and the earth cries out and disturbs my slumber. May whoever find this have the good fortune to use the knowledge well.

Paulus K. Fahlstrom

((This is the end of the first journal and story-line. I'll have a bit of a transition period and tell the occurances from various perspectives before beginning the next. I've also spent the springtime cleaning up the fortress and moving my massive piles of crafts, blocks and assorted junk into my failed waterfall project's water storage tank. (Most of the year was frozen which made it completely impossible to implement. You'll see the quadruple falls design running through the center of the main fort and around the stairwell. The upper portion is essentially completed, but the lower pumps were never installed since I realized I didn't have flowing water for 95% of the time.) In any case, I'm moving all the useless junk away and sealing both it and my garbage dumps in, in order to help contain the clutter for those that may wish to see the place in adventure mode. There are ways in, mentioned in story-line, though you might have to jump a little to get there.

Kudos to anyone that wants to post amusing or interesting engravings from Dorenemal history in. Feel free. My favorite engraving remains the one on the south-temple wall of a dwarf striking down a bronze collossus. ;)

I'll try to get the maps and saves up sometime early next week.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **January 24, 2009, 12:31:12 am**

I'm pretty sure sealing doesn't help with clutter at all. Lead bins (and other really heavy bins) are the only things I know of that are 100% effective in containing clutter. That and magma...

Anyhow, an excellent first installment. I look forward with great anticipation to the rest of the series!

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **January 24, 2009, 08:59:07 am**

Congratulations!

Yeah, from what i've found, lead or really full bins are the way to stop clutter. anything with a weight of less than a certain amount (might be 1000, not sure), get randomly flung around.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 24, 2009, 04:54:53 pm**

((Darn. And here I thought that by walling off my 50 bins of finished junk that'd take care of the dispersion problem. Ah well, it'll be cluttered then.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 26, 2009, 06:47:59 pm**

Deep within the earthen embrace the goblin Snodub Mutogxuspgas paced. The workers should be about through by now, despite the uncanny hardness of the earth where they had been instructed to dig. They should not be doing this, she knew. Goblins were not meant to be dwarves, not meant to tunnel so deep. But yet how could she refuse her god? As High Priestess she should have been beyond such doubts, but the promise of unearthly power as told to her by her Olsmo still left her with questions. He'd explained the necessity of it, and then tortured her for her questions, but she was intelligent and a far too useful tool for him to completely dispose of. But these were nothing new to her, and she reveled in her worship.

It was the changes to their structure that seemed so out of place. The wars hadn't been going well, and she knew the alliances with the other tribes had been strained by it. The dwarves had proven to be an uncannily resilient yet mortal foe. Yet mortal. She smiled, knowing full well that they had the advantage there. Clicking her toungue and snapping her fingers brought her two attendants, lesser priests both, running. They were both well trained and she felt that such an escort would be prudent, all things considered. One did not venture below the surface of Gaxusnang unprepared.

She met no impediment to their progress as they navigated the complex tunnels warrenned underneath the surface. No creatures disturbed their pace, and not idly she reflected that heavy use could accomplish much. But there had been significant cost. Her tribe had been weakened by the wars, and add to this the necessity of maintaining an underground presence and the cost of using inexperienced labor as miners. If only the soldiers had brought more dwarven prisoners back with them! They were expendible, but also much less likely

to cause cave-ins that would slow or stall progress. She passed the patrols guarding the entrance to the mines without thought and began descending as she nearly trampled over a goblin in her haste. It recognized her and began grovelling on the ground.
"Most holy Priestess, I have been sent to tell you that we have nearly reached where you have commanded. We can hear the hollowness of that accursed rock."
She merely nodded and walked by, nodding to one of her attendants who slowed enough to administer a few well-placed kicks for the temerity that the laborer had in addressing her.

They slowed again as they approached the dig site, copper digging tools littering the ground and a pair of crude and guttering torches were all that marked the area, apart from the strangely pusling blue stone. The feeble tschik-tschik of picks stopped mintues after she arrived as one of the goblins broke through a crumbling section of wall into the pitch-black chamber and clambered in to explore it. No sound could be heard from within after mere seconds. One of her attendants grabbed a torch while the other shoved the miners to one side and they prepared to enter the chamber. She made a note to have the goblin that entered killed. She was so close to her god's goal she would not risk having an underling cause complications. The three stepped through the hole into what appeared to be a vast chamber.

Or so it had seemed at first. It was only then that Snodub realized that her initial perceptions had been wrong. The torchlight simply didn't seem to illuminate the room as the darkness itself strove against the light. She could see no weapon here, nor source of power that they could use to help defeat their enemies. No tomes of knowledge, nor wealth with which to cement alliances. They advanced through the room only to discover it quite small, a mere enclosure in the stone, but despite their advance still darkened as though no torch could penetrate the depths. A small figure stood, strangely immobile near one side of the room. She whispered to her attendants to have the miner's legs broken first in punishment for it's boldness.

The pair advanced on the silent figure, but as they approached the miner turned to face them and they paused, hesitantly. In that hesitation the priest holding the torch simply exploded, showering the room in gore and blood, torch dropping to the ground and nearly dying before again sending out it's feeble light. The other priest was jerked into the air as if by hidden strings and a raspy gurgle managed to escape it's lips as the air around it slowly crushed the life out of it. It was then that Snodub knew fear. The miner advanced on her haltingly, as if unaccustomed to it's body, as she stammered out:"The great Olsmo has sent us here, we are but his humble servants."

The miner looked at her then and she quailed beneath the gaze. Where eyes had been stood now two pits of blackness, pulling her into a maelstrom of oblivion. The miner laughed then, the reverberations of it shaking the very foundations of the fortress, an ugly sound, bespeaking a host of unnatural deaths. He pointed a finger at her and commanded:

"Call your people together. In one hour I shall instruct you all in the true meaning of sacrifice."

Snodub dared not to doubt, nor to disobey that command. The force of it crushed her ability to think as she raced out of the tunnel. But the thought sent her insinuated itself in her psyche. Here was a new god that they could worship. A god that would grant unto them the power that they would need to defeat their enemies!

Back in the small room a figure of shadow walked away from his prison, thoughts awhirl. His lieutenants had survived then. Or at least some of them. But Olsmo would pay for waiting so long to seek out his old master, they would all pay for his imprisonment. Just as soon as he unbound the magical locks which held them in place. That was a simple matter for one of the ancient gods of chaos. And he had here the primary ingredient, already waiting and prepared. The blood sacrifice of only a few dozen was required, but it pleased him to make an example of these lower races. They would all perish, and then with the combined forces of the others they would unleash devastation upon the world such as it had never known.

It had only been a month since he had departed from the ruins of Kilrudmorul, heading back to his home. But his dreams haunted him and he woke quickly. He knew what he had seen, and it had been what he'd been warned of in other visions. His conversations with his god had told him much of the times before, but little of what to expect in the now. Perhaps it was his attunement to the earth that saved him when the destruction came. Perhaps it was divine providence. Or perhaps it was simply good luck that he'd been in a place where the earth hadn't opened up to swallow whole mountains, or shot up through the plains like gigantic spears. The earth buckled and lept as though struck a massive blow, one which punctured it to the very core. Fissures miles long had opened up into the earth, vast sinkholes formed and the grinding of stone was heard for nearly five days before the land quieted again. Yet he had been fortunate enough to get by with only mild injuries, scrapes and bruises that would heal in time.

It was the end of the world as he knew it.

Strangely he felt fine.

Title: Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)
Post by: Aardvark on January 27, 2009, 11:58:09 am

Now kids. This is what we call foreshadowing. This is by no means good foreshadowing, but great foreshadowing. Now go watch some pictures of female dwarves that are only wearing their beards ;D

Title: Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on January 27, 2009, 08:07:55 pm

The king paced back and forth in the cave as he waited. Dourly he reflected on the degeneracy of his title. It had once been a grand thing, a symbol of pride and honor, a reflection of their race. That was before the thrice accursed queen had gained control. He was still unsure how it had happened. Her father had been reasonably popular, which had shifted the power in his family's favor initially, and with his death perhaps many felt his children would continue his legacy. And then after his death they had all gone ... strange. Several died bizzare deaths, under bridges, or abandoned on the outskirts of the mountainhomes by their guards and attacked by goblins, others had simply disappeared, left to travel or hidden in seclusion until only she had been left. Nobody questioned it until now, now that it was too late. Now that her degeneracy had crippled their military, wars left them weakened and their own people despondant and untrusting of royalty. It seemed oddly fitting to him that she should die of an accident, crushed underneath a horse reputedly as she ... no, it would not do to dwell on such matters.

In any case, a guard cleared his throat near the entrance and Tosid signaled him to let the guest in. He eagerly wanted to meet with his supposed 'nephew-in-law'. If he as anything like the dwarf that his niece had married he had some hopes that things would work out.

Initial appearances were not overly favorable, though the dwarf carried himself with a dignity and feline grace common that strangely reminded the king of the great hunting cats. His clothes were dirty and worn, not to mention stained beyond repair. But appearances were nothing to go by in these perilous times. The king himself had taken to holding audiences and meetings in mere caves near the cliffs that had once housed the seat of power of thier kingdom. All else had been destroyed in the earthquakes. Sazirgeb, Gusilnakis, even Dorenemal had little left to show for their erstwhile labors. The king and some others had been spared when the tower came crashing down through the layers, burying much of the central fortress itself in tons of stone and killing many of the inhabitants. That alone nearly broke the kingdom, but the hordes of monsters and abominations that poured out of the earth to seek new holes in the ground to hide in had been far worse. Much of their military had perished saving the others, and still the patrols were being sent out to gather in as many as could be found. It would be a long time before everyone had received word and gathered.

The king shook his head, clearing his thoughts from the idle woolgathering that tended to set in these days. It was hard not to be distracted by better times. Life had become difficult for them all, and hard work and harder dwarves would be what saw them through it all. And in the dwarf before him he sensed a bit of that steel core that would be needed to see them through.

Grimly the King nodded as the dwarf bowed at the waist.

"Paulus, I've been eager to meet you and wondered if I would have the chance."

"Yes my King."

A frown crossed his face. "Enough of That. We're practically related, in an un-official indirect round-about sort of way. Tarin hasn't fully been able to explain it to me, but you can call me Tosid."

"Very well, Lord Tosid." a small smile played across Paulus' face.

"I suppose you wonder why I had you summoned and brought before me?"

Another small smile. "Not really my King. Our homes lie destroyed and it is said you will lead us over the sea to rebuild. I assume you wish me to help with that endeavor by founding another home for us."

The king was taken aback only slightly and motioned for Paulus to sit in the chair opposite to his. All were smoothed obsidian of considerable quality and Paulus' hand could not help running across the dark surfaces, a sigh escaping his mouth. This guesture was not lost on the King who merely nodded.

"Aye, it's one of the few pieces we've managed to salvavage from what's left of Dorenemal. I've still a few crews over there, but it's dangerous work with the cliffs being unstable and the sea beginning to under-cut the cliffs."

"The sea?" He hadn't realized it had been that bad. There had been hundreds of miles of low-lying plains and tundra between their cliffs and the sea last he had been here. Most of that an evil place and infested with undead.

"Aye, I only allow volunteers to go in now, but there's little enough. By now I expect even Avuz's temple has fallen into the waves and only a little of the northern stretch of road remains. We've removed what silver from it we could."

Paulus merely nodded, almost numb, but couldn't help wondering about his own secret that lay hidden in the cliffs.

"We think it'll hold there, provided no more earthquakes hit, but I'm afraid we're in dire straights financially. We'll have enough to get everyone over the water I think, but not much else. I see you've heard what's to happen. But I invited you here to tell you why."

"Why?"

"Yes, I want you to know the reasons behind our move. Some of our people will wish to stay, but I feel it is ill advised. You see... ahem ... I've had a vision." He raised his hand here to ward off any questions, though none were forthcoming. "I have had Avuz herself appear to me. It was she that told me that we should seek a new home across Irreantum, the great waters. I sent out an expedition as to found a place as soon as possible afterwards, but communication between here and there is minimal and I want to be sure there will be a place for us to go when the rest of us arrive.

You... don't seem overly surprised by my vision. Do you have doubts?"

"Hmmm..." Paulus too had been thinking, partially distracted. "No. I too have seen a place in a vision, only a dream, or perhaps a dream of a dream with a strange talking mountain goat. She showed me a place, showed me where I should go and I knew that this would be asked of me." There was more that he kept back, the real reason why that place had been chosen. It was not his information to reveal.

"Then you'll do it?"

"Aye, my King."

"Tosid."

"Aye, Tosid."

"Excellent. We'll need many such places of refuge in this new land I hear. Reports claim that it's a wild place, very unlike our home here. I'll have the papers given to you, though I'm afraid I've little to spare in the way of funds. Enough to get you and some others passage across. From there you're on your own, I'm afraid."

"We'll manage. I'll ask around. Surely there's a few crazy enough to go traipsing off into the wilds with me."

He laughed lightly. "From what I hear you'll have no shortage of volunteers. I only hope that you'll be successful. I need you to build a place of safety for us, Paulus. A place from which we can grow."

"Is that a direct order then?"

"No, you're free to chose. I'll not bind you so. But we need this, Paulus. You must see that."

"I do. Don't worry. I'll go, and you'll have your Mountain of Refuge."

"Thank you."

"Milord."

He bowed and left.

The king shook his head. That had been remarkably easy, considering all the other meetings and demands placed upon him. If only all his people were like that, he thought.

We could move mountains.

and Kolok all came with me, though much of our belongings were lost when Dorenemal was struck by the earthquake. Fre mourns the loss of her prize gemstone, the large Heliodor that she obtained after the defeat of the original goblin leader of Vilesewers, the goblin name for Dorenemal. Another of our original seven was Crush, brother of the guard slain by the titan that Kuli killed. It seems his parents had a sense of humor. All nine children of theirs were named the same, both male and female. I can only hope he's not a shiftless womanizing layabout like his brother was. Fre already doesn't like him. Neither does Ragnar for that matter, but at least Ragnar has her axe to threaten him with. Regrettably all of Fre's kitchen equipment was lost, too. Udib, a stoneworker and Monom a farmer came with us as well, but as I mentioned, they were swept overboard during one the massive storms that seem to riddle these waters.

Once we got far enough east things seemed to calm down, thankfully. I can't express how glad I am to be off that boat. I think I spent the entire voyage below-decks, green as a pine forest. My legs still feel weak from it all and I dislike even reminding myself of the motion. Ugh.

Oddbodd we picked up in some port on our way here. Seems he was looking for work after an abandoned attempt at an ocean fortress. Something he called a waterbore. I'll have to look over his drawings sometime.

Pete is our final addition, thanks to the captain, and our guide to our location. You see, she (yes, I know, her name is Pete) was hired from the local populace to take us to where my maps indicated we should start. She's a native of this new continent and one of her kin took the first group of settlers to their home while they surveyed the maps that had been made. Compared to us she is bronze-skinned to the extreme, but even the native humans make her look as pale as us in comparison. We've seen a few since we've docked and they're very tall, even for humans. Most of the ones we've seen are obviously either scouts or warriors, and wear only little clothing, carrying large oval shaped shields made of wood and hide and even larger spears. Most of their spear tips appear to be steel or iron and roughly a foot long. We'll try to make sure we stay on their good side.

It's been a day since we've ported and I'm feeling steady enough to write this as I doubt we'll have much time once we get underway. Pete informs us that we've got a long, long road ahead of us. Much of which is infested with dangerous nations, swamps and wild animals. A wagon is being built as I write, and our goods loaded so it looks like we'll be underway soon.

I feel I must note that we were forced to trade our clothing away for new ones at our last stop. It was simply getting too hot to wear the heavy furs. Even now in early spring I can feel the sweltering heat and humidity around me, a strange contrast to our frozen home. The bugs... aah the bugs. I could write volumes about them and their size, but I won't. I'll be too busy swatting them and making sure I don't get carried off.

I can only hope the secrets of Dorenemal are safely destroyed or remain hidden under the heart-shaped lake along the high cliffs. Where we're going we won't need enemies following us. They'll already be all around.

(Below is a map indicating the initial route of the first group of settlers (Tosid's group) and the second.)
[Spoiler \(click to show/hide\)](#)



((And character profiles. I did the best I could to match them up. Ragnar, you're still female... sorry, but a good match. Too bad you don't like pixies anymore. You even still worship a volcano-related god. Fre, your's was easy to choose. And Crush, congrats, you have a Microcline block and even like the stone. Sorry, Pete, you're a girl too, but a native of the continent. Kolok, Ragnar's persuaded you to worship her deity. Oddbodd, well, I read through Aredolush and references to your character previously, how much of that do you want me to work in?))

[Spoiler \(click to show/hide\)](#)

FPS: 99 'Paulus' Athelidok, "'Paulus' Ringpoints", Architect

'Paulus' Athelidok has been happy lately. He has been satisfied at work lately.
He is a worshipper of Urdim Silveryhelped the Bejeweled Tax.
He is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. He is a member of The Walls of Zeal.
'Paulus' Athelidok likes Loamy sand, Trifle pewter, Blue diamond, Maple, amber, Pig tail Fabric, bolts, gauntlets, chickens for their soft feathers and Cave wheat for their stalks. When possible, he prefers to consume dwarven milk and Pig tail Seeds. He absolutely detests cave spiders. He is often nervous. He is very assertive. He has a good awareness of his own emotions. He is eager for new experiences. He is trusting. He finds helping others very rewarding. He is modest. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 99 'Fre' Rîtholiden, "'Fre' Noblepaddles", Farmer

'Fre' Rîtholiden has been happy lately.
She is a worshipper of Logem Earthencolors.
She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Walls of Zeal.
'Fre' Rîtholiden likes Periclase, Tin, Pink jade, Kapok, pearl, Pig tail Fabric, the color cardinal, bolts, tower shields and rings. She tends not to openly express emotions. She is put off by authority and tradition. She is trusting. She doesn't like to compromise with others. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 100 'Ragnar' Thikutsazir, "'Ragnar' Bookbridges", Axedwarf

'Ragnar' Thikutsazir has been quite content lately. She has been satisfied at work lately.
She is a dubious worshipper of Asën the Glowing Iron of Brands.
She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Walls of Zeal.
'Ragnar' Thikutsazir likes Loamy sand, Rose gold, Citrine, Glumprong, high boots, rings, coins and cats for their aloofness. She absolutely detests purring maggots. She often feels discouraged. She can handle stress. She prefers familiar routines. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She is immodest. She is not affected by the suffering of others. She lacks confidence. She tries to live a well-organized life. She possesses great willpower. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 99 'Kolok' Teshkadmeng, "'Kolok' Pricelashes", Carpenter

'Kolok' Teshkadmeng has been happy lately. He has been satisfied at work lately.
He is a faithful worshipper of Asën the Glowing Iron of Brands.
He is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. He is a member of The Walls of Zeal.
'Kolok' Teshkadmeng likes Black sand, Anurite, Red grossular, the color dark chestnut, coats and cats for their aloofness. When possible, he prefers to consume Plump helmet spawn. He is often nervous. He occasionally overindulges. He is unassertive. He can be very happy and optimistic. He is candid and sincere in dealings with others. He thinks it is incredibly important to strive for excellence. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 99 'Crush' Atölolon, "'Crush' Findgear", Peasant

'Crush' Atölolon has been quite content lately. He has been satisfied at work lately.
He is an ardent worshipper of Etur.
He is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. He is a member of The Walls of Zeal.
'Crush' Atölolon likes Microcline, Nickel, Star sapphire, spears, coins and chickens for their soft feathers. He absolutely detests cave spiders. He occasionally overindulges. He can handle stress. He is somewhat reserved. He has a good awareness of his own emotions. He admires tradition. He is candid and sincere in dealings with others. He lacks confidence. He is disorganized. He strives for excellence. He acts impulsively. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 99 'Oddbodd' Godenromlam, "'Oddbodd' Ropecloak", Blacksmith

'Oddbodd' Godenromlam has been quite content lately.
He is a worshipper of Rîsen the Silvery Mountain.
He is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. He is a member of The Walls of Zeal.
'Oddbodd' Godenromlam likes Limestone, Copper, Banded agate, horn, high boots and mules for their stubbornness. When possible, he prefers to consume Dwarven wine. He is very energetic and active. He prefers familiar routines. He is an ardent believer in convention and traditional society. He is guarded in relationships with others. He is disorganized. He needs alcohol to get through the working day. He likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 99 'Pete' Urmimustuth, "'Pete' Swimfence", Metalsmith

'Pete' Urmimustuth has been quite content lately.
She is a faithful worshipper of Rîsen the Silvery Mountain.
She is the leader of The Walls of Zeal. She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Walls of Zeal.
'Pete' Urmimustuth likes Native aluminum, Billon, Pyrite, green glass, the color chocolate, shields, coffins and cows for their haunting moos. When possible, she prefers to consume Dwarven ale. She is comfortable in social situations. She can handle stress. She is relaxed. She appreciates art and natural beauty. She likes to try new things. She is trusting. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She does not go out of her way to help others. She strives for excellence. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 28, 2009, 07:53:42 pm**

((Ok... I think I have the world-file here!

<http://dffid.wimbli.com/file.php?id=813>

This is the region 1 folder. If you want to see where the fortress is located try looking at the Reclaim option.

Anything else you guys want from Dorenemal let me know. I'll obviously keep a pre-abandon save just in case.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **January 28, 2009, 08:44:10 pm**

((Thanks Paulus.

By the way, what happened to Aardvark? Wasn't Fre in love with him? Personally, I think she'd mourn the loss of him rather than her nice gem.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **January 29, 2009, 02:28:08 am**

Quote from: Frelock on January 28, 2009, 08:44:10 pm

((Thanks Paulus.

By the way, what happened to Aardvark? Wasn't Fre in love with him? Personally, I think she'd mourn the loss of him rather than her nice gem.))

((He will arive soon, I asked if he could come to but it was full then. He might arrive in the seckond group.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 29, 2009, 01:12:54 pm**

((Aardvark's got it right. You two probably said some overly mushy and sentimental goodbye at the docks which some sailor witnessed and harrassed you about before you kicked him in the nads and threw him overboard. First migrant wave I'll find someone appropriate for him. Of course, getting you two to be friends again may take some doing... not sure how I'll manage that. But we'll see.

Oh... and for those that try out the save... um... I learned some important things.

1. Walling all the useless crap off somewhere does nothing. For some reason even with it walled in and the gates sealed all of the super light stuff wound up in massive piles strewn all over the OUTSIDE of my walls. Must be some sort of quantum tunneling effect.
2. Don't have your gates sealed and have enemies at your fort when you abandon. (Ahem) My apologies for those who venture in. You'll have to deal with about 250 rotting corpses (Should you reclaim) or tons of bones all over the place (should you adventure there). Apparently that means the two goblin ambush squads actually won and all the dwarves inside the fortress died rather than fled. Ah well, live and learn. Or at least learn. My dwarf is even lying dead in his room!

I assure you all that I've learned from this and the next go around I'll do my best to make things as clean as possible. I could have probably managed to make things cleaner, but it would have taken years in game time to trade away all that crap and since I have no magma, nor a chasm there's no other actual way of getting rid of it.

Except perhaps dumping it in a lake... maybe I'll have to try that. Anyways, next post should bring us to the beginning of the second chapter.))

Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 29, 2009, 03:39:20 pm**

20th of Obsidian 1068 2

Well, we've been travelling around the top of the mountain range that will presumably be our new home for a while. The areas surrounding it is a vast wilderness. Pete calls it a savanna. We have seen several animals that are new to us, many of which Pete says are dangerous, but tasty. I have seen a giraffe now and a more awkward animal I can't think of. It's no wonder they get hunted. You can see them a long ways off. Now that the wagon is able to move properly again I've taken time to catch up on writing.

The past months have been a gruesome slog though swamps and jungles the likes of which I couldn't have imagined before this. For much of the jungle I was up front with Pete using my sword to clear the vegetation. Pete kept referring to it as my 'machete'. She thinks we're crazy for settling in the south and has told us so numerous times. Personally I suspect that she is overreacting, but at least she's kept us alive these last few months. We lost one pack animal to quicksand, losing much of our armor in the process. Another was lost to a giant crocodile near the river. We tried to recover some of the baggage but were unable to. I even lost my sword in the process, stuck in one of the giant creature's sides, before we saw more approaching and were forced to retreat. I swear it must have been at least six dwarf-lengths long. Our animal didn't suffer long, I suspect the massive animal dragging it under and rolling it till it stopped moving had something to do with that.

Once we were attacked by large snakes but drove them off quickly, and twice by monkeys. Thankfully no harm done except a little bit of pride on Ragnar's part. She was helping get the wagon out of the mud with the rest of us and one of the annoying creatures, a rhesus macaque, according to Pete made off with her axe. She vowed to eat monkey for a month.

On our way we passed near enough to see the mountain range to the south of our route that Pete informed us was a bad place to go. Apparently it's infested with lizardmen. Four different tribes of them. And on and off we've had to chase off thieves. Mostly tigermen.

For Pete's part she has done a good job of keeping us out of trouble, and she was well worth what I gave to the captain. Had I not, I doubt we'd have made it this far. Secretly I think that Pete had a bet going with some of her kin that took the others in. When they saw how woefully ... uninformed we were about the dangers of this place they immeadiately began taking bets on survival rates. From what Pete mentioned, only once mind, we were given even lower odds than the first group on account of our going south. According to them no 'civilized' groups live south of the mountains. I'm not sure I like the sound of that.

The savanna we're in now is hot, to say the least. But it's not without plant and animal life, which is good. And the hard-packed soil, much of it sandy, shows traces of good minerals, some even out in the open. Supposedly we'll make our location at nearly the start of the year. Very fortuitous I'd say. I'm more than ready to get off this wagon and get some work done.



Title: **Re: Rise of the Fahlstrom Clan: Dorenemal, or Diamondsense (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **January 29, 2009, 04:01:13 pm**

I hope there's copper and zinc in these hills.
Oddbodd has dreamed of Olonkulet, city of brass today.

1st of Granite 1069 3

Paulus stood next to Fre on the wagon, doing his best to maintain his balance as they crossed the uneven terrain, with it's clumps of grass and low-lying shrubs. Few trees blocked his view, and most of those were tallish and bare in the lower areas where animals could still have reached them. A heat shimmer lay on the horizon despite the time of year, though there were occasional mud-ponds that they came across that hadn't dried out yet. He swatted at an acorn fly buzzing around his ear as he kept his other hand over his eyes to shield them from the sun and get a better view of the mountainsides as they travelled along them.

He spotted something that looked promising.

"Fre, take her over that way a bit. Yeah, up ahead there, those twin outcroppings."

The two spurs of rock seemed like fingers of the mountains, clawing into the sandy savanna, but as they got closer they noticed another feature, further south of them. A massive gash in the land, a huge crevasse split the mountainside a short distance away from where they sat on the wagon. The others were a short ways behind, except Kolok, whose sole remaining weapon meant he had to stay near the middle of the group where he could help protect from any animals. Or other more intelligent enemies.

Fre called out:"Heeeeeaaaaagh." and the musk-ox slowed to a halt. Not that it had been going fast to begin with.

Turning around Paulus waited for the others to close the gap before announcing:
"This's it mates. This be the place."

Signs of relief etched their faces, even Oddbodd who had stoicly shouldered his portion of the weight. All except Pete. Her scowl was visible to all. Almost angrily she countered,
"This? A few mud-holes for water and a cursed crack in the rock is what we have then? I've spotted at least a dozen better spots in the mountains as we passed, just the last few days." She scanned the cliff-sides.
"All I see in the hills here is copper. Copper and stone. No exposed iron, no exposed veins of gems. Are ye sure you're in the right place?"

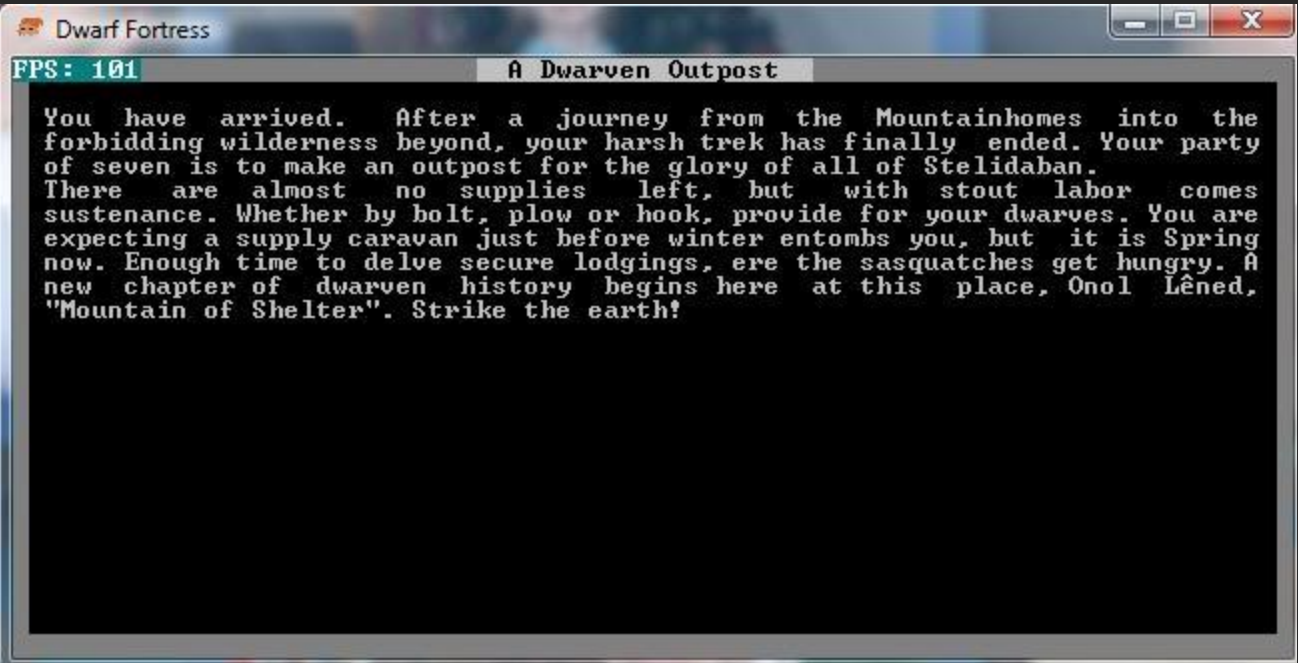
Paulus nodded, unswayed.

"Aye. This is it. This is exactly where I saw."

No one commented at that peculiar statement but Pete saw that she would not win the argument, despite being the guide, and de-facto leader.

Fre had already begin loosing the animals from the wagon as Paulus turned.

"All right! Let's strike the earth. If Tosid want's his place of refuge then let it be here. Here be Onol Kenet, Onol Lened. The mountain of safety, the mountain of shelter."



Everyone sprang into action then. They'd had time to discuss who'd be doing what as they travelled, though somehow Crush had managed to not get any specific assignments. Paulus and Ragnar grabbed the two picks from the wagon and began to carve into the side of the south-eastern finger of rock as the others began off-loading the lumber and other supplies. A temporary shelter would be erected first according to Paulus' plan, with many of the workshops outside as they carved out the true entrance and dwellings. Pete had been convincing; the need to be well defended in these wild lands was a high priority.

Fre and Pete would see to the food provisions, with Pete helping to point out specific plants that were edible. Many of the edible growths were similar to their own home, but with distinct differences due to climate. Kolok took to augmenting the wood supply and clearing the land around the entrance in order that wagons could properly come and go. Oddbodd began setting up the workshops, including a woodburner, forge and smelter which Paulus laid out the designs for. If they were to stay and survive they knew they'd have to work long and hard to get settled. And the year had only just begun.

Crush would motion that he be pressed into any job there needs work done in, and he also motions that Paulus be crowned a demi-god for finding a dwarf that likes microline.

3 Granite Early spring

It'd been only three days since they arrived and things were going well apace. Kolok had the enjoyable task of cutting lumber around the entrances to their home, or what would be their home after Ragnar and Paulus finished excavating that copper vein they'd found shortly after digging in. The breeze coming off the savanna managed to cool him sufficiently for it to be somewhat comfortable, though the heat was already more than he'd even had back at Dorenemal. Hefting his axe again he approaced a sizeable acacia tree that was to be his next job, when he noticed some movement to the south out of the corner of his eye. Curious he quietly moved that direction, trying to be inconspicuous, lest it be something dangerous.

He was wise to do so as a few hundred lengths away he spied nearly a half dozen little... rat like things only bigger scattering before a rather large and apparently hungry cave spider. The spider was nearly the size of a pony colt, far larger than any he'd seen before. It's grey-brown body was covered with dust and though it's quarry was much smaller than it they were evenly matched for speed. The little prarie-dog dodged this way and that but eventually was trapped by a string of web that the spider shot at it, allowing the spider to get

close enough.

It was then that it occurred to Kolok that there was a ready food source if he could drive the spider off. The spider was hunting down another of the diminutive creatures when Kolok began stalking towards it, trying to catch it by surprise as the hunter became hunted. His shoes rustled softly on the sandy soil as he approached and the spider somehow must have sensed him coming, whirling on him in a flash and spewing a mighty mess of webbing that caught Kolok by surprise. He had the fortune of only catching a small amount of it that he wiped off quickly as the spider approached and as the spider rushed in to bite it's larger meal he swung hard, connecting with it's body and sending it flying a good stone's throw away.

Three other prarie dogs lay on the ground quivering in the hot sun as Kolok approached the scene. It was with considerable chagrin that he was careless enough to not notice the shifting sand to one side as a second spider sprang up in ambush, shooting webbing at him and entangling an arm. He tore his arm free and flailed wildly, causing the spider to miss him and a swift overhead chop brought the creature crashing to the ground as well.

Stepping carefully now he entered the spider's lair and was no longer surprised when three more spiders sprang up in ambush, one popping out of the sand next to him. It was a grim reminder of the dangers of the land as he brought his axe down quickly stilling the creature close to him. Twin bursts of webbing caught him in the torso and face and he clawed it of as quickly as he could. He managed to do so in time to see one of the spiders approaching from the front trying to pin him beneath one of it's hairy legs. It missed as he stumbled back.

The force of the blow from behind told him that he was in trouble. The spider had jumped into him knocking him flat and managed a swift bite to his neck. He could feel a numbness sweeping through him but knew that if he gave in there was little chance for him. Pushing himself up he knocked off the spider and in a fury began sweeping about him wildly with the axe. He caught one spider in the leg, severing it cleanly and causing it to withdraw a pace or two. The other he twirled to meet as it advanced and a quick pair of blows cut it in two. The wounded spider, too, he met with equal brutality and quickly dispatched it.

Kolok stood there panting for a few minutes before he surveyed the area to make sure there were not more of them and that it would be clear to retrieve the corpses. Careful to avoid the webbing he made his way back to camp to tell everyone, a deep purple bruise already beginning to form on the back of his neck where he'd been bit.

Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

We've only been here three days and already things have gotten interesting. Kolok spied a large cave spider ambush to the south of him and went to investigate. He managed to kill five of the ghastly spiders by himself, an impressive feat. I shuddered when I saw the creatures, all spindly legs and hairy bodies. Nasty things... spiders. At least I wasn't the only one. Apparently Crush shares my aversion for them.

Pete says that Kolok is lucky. Their venom is usually deadly and he's fortunate that his constitution is good enough to take a bite like that without more serious consequences. His bite marks look terrible though. Still, according to Pete the spiders are a delicacy for the humans, who, appalling as it may be, even eat the smaller versions of the cave spiders. Sometimes raw, though supposedly there's a trick to bite them before they bite you. Crush was asked to set up a butchery, tanning workshop and leatherworks so we could process the kills, but he refused to touch the spiders which left Oddbodd to do it as the rest of us were busy elsewhere.

Unfortunately it took us so long to process things that two of the prarie-dog corpses rotted before we could get to them. Still, though. It's a considerable amount of meat provided I can get myself to eat large cave spider. The flesh takes on a soft whitish color and consistency not unlike lobster when cooked, so perhaps I'll just think of that should it become necessary. I think I'll stick with other foods for now.

((Serious... a large cave spider ambush... never seen one of these before. Had they been giants I'd have stayed well enough away. Oh, and five kills for Kolok. Apparently the spiders provide a decent amount of meat each (10 I think) as well as leather which got processed into armor for us by Crush. Large cave spider chitin armor... fun stuff.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 30, 2009, 04:49:30 pm**

9th of Slate Journal Entry

Ever since the first to-do between Kolok and the spiders it's been quiet around here. It's still accursedly hot, but I think I'm getting used to that. We've got most of the main workshops up already and our temporary shelter taken care of. But best of all is that we've now got tables and chairs, as well as beds for us! It'll be nice to not have to sleep on the ground with the vermin. I woke up the other day with a lizard sitting on my forehead.

Not the best way to wake up.

Particularly when the first thing that comes to mind is 'Ah! Spiders!'.

Thankfully for me my reflexes are good. Unfortunately for the lizard my bed is close to the wall.

It's funny around here, like a strange combination of untamed lands. We get Fluffy wambler and fairies and pixies (annoying beard-pulling little pests) and such as well as other animals. Just now we have a small herd of gazelle grazing outside our entrance. We're doing fine for food, so there's no need to disturb them at the moment, but I've had a few crossbows and some bone bolts made just in case.

21st of Slate

I've been below working on the entrance to our true fortress with Ragnar and hadn't been up for a while. I just noticed that our little mudholes are finally drying up. The ground in them is beginning to crack except at the very bottom where it's still moist. Much of the grass and vegetation is starting to take on a brown look as well and the horizon has become golden, with patches of dark green that are the trees. It's remarkably pretty, and I find I like this new land of ours.

Just to the northeast the vegetation has not gone brown just yet, which seems strange to me, but Pete thinks it might be some sort of underground water source that keeps things just a little moister than the rest of the area. According to her it'll probably dry up when summer hits and it get's hot.

I kinda hoped she was joking, but that's not her way. I thought this was hot.

5th of Felsite

I came up to tell the others that we've struck some good minerals. In fact our new central chamber is almost half and half, bauxite and limestone. Both of which are pretty, minerologically speaking of course. And the white and red colors will likely remain the color motif of our fortress here. I think the butchereries will have to be made out of bauxite, that way it won't look as dirty.

While I was above Pete took the opportunity to show me a new animal I'd never seen. There were four of them grazing just east of our encampment. They were large and grey, as tall as a large horse but easily two or three times as thick, with heavy thick legs and horns. Or rather a large horn on their nose and a smaller one just back from it. The face looks kind of like a pig, but the size is impressive. Apparently they're called ~~Rhinocerauses~~ ~~Rhinoceruses~~Rhinos. I'll have to ask Pete about the proper spelling later. They look dangerous but Pete says they're usually calm unless surprised. Let's hope that doesn't happen.

12th of Hematite Summer

Work continues of course. Ragnar and I have the main chamber nearly complete now and will begin branching out.

Our Metalworks are also now up and running, with a Wood furnace, smelter and Forge up near the north entrance. Oddbodd's begun processing the copper ore into bars and Pete's even hammered out some basic copper armor. Shield, Plate, Greaves and helm. That's all we had enough for at the time, but it's a sight better than not having any should we need it.

A winged horse was also spotted in the air a little ways up the hill-side. I'd only heard of such creatures in myth and legend but now I realize that those stories had to come from somewhere. I just never thought I'd see a Pegasus for myself. For a minute I wished we had Lord Rovod here. The idea of trying to catch, tame and war train a flying steed would certainly appeal to him.

Speaking of home I've had some time to talk to Ragnar as we worked below. She'd changed considerably since I left Dorenemal, and I suspect that much of that came with the destruction of our former home and the loss of her lover, Delen. I suspect she blames herself to a certain degree for not being with him at the end. I had once thought that she was fond of fairies, but now that she's actually seen one I don't think she's as impressed with them as in her childhood imagination. Still, the works been good for her and her melancholy hopefully won't last forever.

Fre I suspect misses Aardvark as well, but the King had requested that several of our metalsmiths stay and help equip remaining soldiers before heading out. She keeps busy, helping Crush and Pete gather food, or turning it into better food and drink. She's had Pete bang out a copper skillet to cook things in as well as a small copper knife to work with, so hopefully things will be looking up in our diet.

23rd of Hematite

The curse of civilizations everywhere have begun showing up, and in numbers. Within days of each other Fre nearly bumped into a Tigerman thief that was trying to sneak in and Kolok was startled by a Lizardman thief that appeared around a tree he was about to cut. Unfortunately both managed to escape, but it served as a warning to us. We've put up traps at our entrance now. That should at least serve as some sort of line of defense. Unfortunately the sandy soil doesn't serve well for other forms of traps.

(Below is a sketch of their initial settlement)

((And yes, I'm going to avoid the mass-trap-insanity defensive lines. Sure, I can make my fort impregnable by having a hundred traps, but that's no fun. So in the future I'm limiting it to at most two strings of cage traps and one of weapon traps. Mostly to cut down on annoyances like thieves and babysnatchers. Our true defenses will be more pragmatic as well as physical (fortified entrance and dwarven might!).))



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **January 30, 2009, 08:05:45 pm**

((Large cave spiders!! what mod are you using for this paulus?))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **January 31, 2009, 10:05:59 am**

A really cool sounding one, obviously.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **January 31, 2009, 11:21:00 am**

Giant entrance?
Mmmm, I can tell my engineer'll love it here.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 31, 2009, 03:04:21 pm**

((I'm using Mayday's Legendary Lands actually. I just happen to be on at a savage location, which makes things much more interesting.))

12th of Malachite Autumn

Ragnar wiped the sweat and dust off her forehead with her sleeve, darkening the material slightly in the process. Working below was hot work, and she'd taken a few odd jobs up top as well, helping out Oddbodd by providing fuel in the form of Charcoal. Everything just seemed hot. It was a relief to be in the shade though, and out of the sun. Almost all of them had gotten tanner in their time here, and Kolok looked like he was beginning to turn native, almost the same shade as Pete herself. In fact, all but Paulus, who spent more time below than she, were darker than herself. Heading over to the back of the enclosure to get a drink she was about to plunk herself down

for a break when Fre called out from the kitchen/campfire in the middle of the room.

"Oi, Ragnar. I found some plants I thought you might like and brewed you up a batch o' somethin' good. It's three barrels to your left."

Ragnar tiredly nodded, the heat up here sapping her will to converse more than normal. Setting it up horizontal on a neighboring barrel she tapped it and drew a stone mug-full of the clear liquid. She sniffed it and it was almost odorless, with a slight hint of earth that was more than just the everpresent dust. Taking a swig her eyes closed as she savored the drink.

"Ah, thank ye lass. 'S been to long sin' I had me sum 'o dat good stuff. Nice ta ken it can be made here, aye?"

Fre grinned slightly. It had been Ragnar's favorite brew back home, but the differences were present, even here, that simply couldn't be erased. Both of them got a slightly wistful smile as they thought about their mutual past. Then Ragnar grimaced and downed the mug in one swift gulp.

"Well, best I's be gettin' b'low."

Some times it was better not to reflect. Remembering could be painful. Paulus came up a short time later and Fre ambushed him too, offering a smallish biscuit she'd made.

"Here. Try this." She said, handing it to him. He gave it a sniff then took a bite, a slow smile spreading across his face. "What'd ya think?"

He finished the rest off in a measured bite, savoring the flavor before answering. "Oh, that's good. I've not had that kind of food since we left home. That's truly exceptional. Better than your seed-cakes at Dorenemal I'd say, or at least some of them."

She nodded and smiled appreciatively.

"That's good then. I was worried the flavor might be off."

She began heading back to the kitchen but couldn't help throwing a quip over her shoulder as she retreated.

"I was wondering what to do with the large cave spider tallow and it seemed to go well with the wild strawberry seed flour."

She didn't need to turn to see him gag slightly and shudder as he turned and headed for the barrels of drink.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Flintus10** on **January 31, 2009, 07:24:39 pm**

Was my guy badly injured by the cave spiders? Or was it just a couple of torn wounds. This new fort is looking great keep up the wonderful writing

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Ultra-Towerdude** on **February 01, 2009, 05:57:41 am**

Hi. Does the Community Fortress mean that you can ask for a named dwarf? If so i would like one.
Name: Der Kartoffel
Prof: Farmer
Gender: Male

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **February 01, 2009, 11:48:15 am**

I found the original profile for Oddbod:

Oddbod "The Odd" was born about eighty years ago in the Great Brass City of Olonkulet, or Gearabbey's. This place was the absolute pinnacle of dwarven engineering, rumored to have an enormous golem powered by a fire in its belly. Unfortunately, the fortress fell when the machines in the city went wrong, halting the production of brass, tea, crumpets and coal, so the population went quite insane overnight. Young Oddbod managed to escape, but to this day he is rather quiet about the machines of his home. He does like brass though.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 01, 2009, 05:37:15 pm**

((Thanks Maggarg. I've seen both of his mentions in the forums before. I'll try to work things in appropriately.

The Potato will be included in the next wave on immigrants. In german of course.

And unfortunately Kolok did receive a neck wound (lt. brown) which means he'll not be allowed to spar. Should you want him in the military again I'll have to do his training the hard way.))

10th of Limestone
The dusty wagons rolled along the edge of the mountains, the lead wagon carrying the liason from the King in these new lands. Not that there was much to liase with. It was then that he spotted the slight curl of smoke ahead, and the squat shape of workshops bordering the feet of the mountain range. With the sparse undergrowth of the savanna, travel had been easy once they got out of the mountain ranges to the east. It had been, either that way, or to come from west and return that way as well, a longer trip with few truly useful stops. A waste of travel for merchants. At least by going east they would be able to cover those civilized enough to trade with them. They pulled up outside the stone enclosure housing the trade depot, just passed the metalworks, already in operation. The liason was somewhat impressed. A functioning metalworks would be very beneficial in these times. He looked down at his paperwork, his contact was one 'Pete', supposedly a native and of the seven dwarves only two looked like natives, and only one of those dressed like one. And she was female. He sighed and stepped down as the merchants continued into the depot to trade.

Merchants have arrived. Apparently some of the first group that came across on Tosid's orders. To hear them tell about it their group split, with seven leaving for the north to establish the mountainhome of Shellhelms and the others staying at Saintorb, the capitol of Zilirezum, the Eternal Hames, and Pete's people. From there they'd gone over trade routes and set out, first to the north, then here to the south. They were a welcome sight. I knew we'd be needing something should merchants show up and so I'd been working on some stonecrafts for the last month or two. I'd tried my hand at it back at Dorenemal and found I enjoyed it, so even though I was out of practice it gave us some bartering material. We had to toss the large cave spider chitin armor on the pile as well, much to Kolok's dismay, but we need the goods we're getting. Or rather, they would be very useful for us. The merchants brought a bar each of Black Bronze, Zinc and Steel. I was particularly pleased with the steel. They brought no drink, having run out and filled their barrels with water instead some ways back. But we did get some food, including several barrels of Plump helmets that Fre can make into wine, as well as some seeds and a bin or two of leather. We also managed to obtain a steel shield, well worth it in exchange for the cave spider armor. We'll be enjoying the company of others from our home for the first time in nearly two years, and it brings back memories, both good and bad, of our first year at Dorenemal. Due largely to Kolok's skill with an axe, our food situation is much better off than it was then.

Apparently Shellhelms, our official capitol for the time being is far, far to the north in climate more akin to our old one. The area is largely uninhabited which may have been the reason for the choice, and the fortress is close to the sea, another good choice. Perhaps for that reason it seems strange to the others that we've chosen this location, when there were other suitable sites near the first. I've remained quiet about this for so long. I want to tell the others, and I've confidence in their decision to remain here, should they know what we truly are building our home on.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 02, 2009, 01:43:46 pm**

5th of Sandstone Journal Entry

A screech filled our little enclosure today as a batman swooped down and alighted on the sand just outside of it. Foolishly the creature walked into our passageways and was caught in a cage trap near the entrance. The denizens of the chasm haven't truly bothered us much as of yet, but if such is to happen more often I fear we may have to deal with them as we are able.

While the rest of us were working apparently Oddbodd took some initiative and swiped our bar of zinc that we got from the caravan. It's gone now, but with it and some copper he has made a couple of bars of brass, which he says is vastly superior. I suspect it may be for other reasons, as nothing has been done with it yet, but we'll have to see. I may need to keep an eye on him as well. He's not of our people and may not understand our traditions, though he seems firmly rooted in his own.

12th of Sandstone

The merchants have departed now, and as they were leaving their guards caught two tigermen thieves trying to sneak up on either them or us. They've been dispatched. A third was discovered having wandered into our traps as well. It's a good thing they're there.

This prompted Ragnar to use the bar of steel we had to make himself an axe. I'd have had Pete do it, but their style of weaponry is slightly different from ours and Ragnar wanted something she was familiar with. In any case, it's nice to have two of them around now, just in case.

1st of Moonstone Early Winter

Pete called me out to the hillside above our camp in the early morning light today to look at something. High above us in the hills I could barely make out to be what looked like a giant insect and a giraffe fighting. It was a strange sight, and didn't last long as the insect turned to flee.

"We'll have to move below now, Paulus."

I turned.

"Hmm... why's that?"

"That was an insectman. One of the swarm that lives in the south here. If one of them knows where we are, the others are sure to follow. And they don't just steal things. They're a relatively advanced species, capable of much thought. They hunt intelligently. We should move below. We're too exposed here."

That gave me some pause. If Pete was worried about it we could accomodate. Though we weren't quite ready down below there was room enough.

"All right. I'll start giving orders to move things below. I'd happen eventually. Now's a good time. I just hope any of our kin can find us."

"If you leave the walls up they'll see the signs. It's pretty obvious when you know what you're looking for."

I nodded. This was certainly a different place than what we were used to. I almost missed the little kobolds. They were tame compared to the other's we've seen.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 03, 2009, 12:49:35 pm**

2nd Obsidian Late Winter

It hasn't gotten that much cooler here. Reminds me of home, except in reverse. There it never got warm, here it never cools.

We've spent most of the winter moving everything below and setting up a secondary line of cage traps, as a precaution. At one point, after we'd gotten all our goods below already a small herd of rhinos, about four of them, took exception to our workshops. Perhaps it was the sun glinting off of a piece of metal or perhaps it was the smell of the butchery, tanner and leatherworks that enraged them. It's hard to say. But they proceeded to charge our shops and destroy them, knocking them over by ramming them before trampling them underfoot. We decided it was best to just leave them be. We'd have had to dismantle the shops at some point anyways.

Oddbodd was aboveground for some reason today and was chased by a batman all over our little area. Until the batman cornered him and began to claw him. Our little compatriot calmly put it in a handlock and broke two of it's fingers before escaping and fleeing back to safety. The batman did not pursue. Perhaps he's learned a lesson from this.

((I never realized rhinos were so ... tough. heh. I actually saved and played with them at one point, sending us all up with weapons and armor to 'hunt' them. Bad, bad, bad idea. Didn't even wound one of them before we were all dead. That's the other reason we'll be moving below. Simply too dangerous up above. Though they don't normally go beserk, I've had a herd of them within feet of our smithy while Pete and Oddbodd were working and they didn't do anything. Funny.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 03, 2009, 07:36:33 pm**

1st of Granite

The seven dwarves gathered below around the clustering of tables next to their newly reconstructed Trade depot, which took on an eerie hue as the torchlight flickered across the rough but deep red bauxite surface. They were all dirty, and tired but the move was complete. They were now firmly entrenched below-ground and that was where they knew they would be safer. The large stockpile of barrels of drink lay in two neat rows behind them, though large piles of rock still lay scattered haphazard about the place.

On their west side lay the black gaping maw of the unfinished entrance, along with five blood-red doors, leading to the butcheries, fishery and garbage dumps. Behind them lay another five red doors, leading to the workshops and the special projects stockpiles. Or at least once they had cleared the rubble they would belong there. A few workshops lay to the south, not somewhat obscured by the dark and right behind the depot lay the massive stone staircase that led both up and down.

Down would be the eventual mines. Up lay the intended dining hall and barracks, though they too were freshly mined and full of stone. And above them was a large section of cleared earth, nearing the surface but not breaking it. The compacted sand had given way easily and been shored up where needed to allow for a large and ample room which would be their storage. Directly above the dining hall would be the new food storage area and bordering that the farms, kitchen, stills and food processing area.

Plans had already been laid for a smithing area beneath the special storage area and shops, with access from above for storage of ore,

bars and supplies. A second offshoot from the farms area would house the animal handling sections. But those had yet to be started and now was not the time.

Paulus stood, wearily but intent, and cleared his throat.

"Well, in our tradition I'd like to say a few things at this time. I think we've done well in setting this place up so far and I'd like to thank everyone for the work that has been done. I have no idea how long till we can expect refugees from home to arrive, nor of how frequent they are to be.

In particular I'd like to thank Pete for her outstanding and much needed help and advice in getting us all here hale and hearty."

He raised a stone mug towards her.

"To Pete, without whom things would be very, very different for us, I have no doubt. We've little enough to give ye at this time, Pete, but to you we extend our hand. You've aided us well in our time of need and have not shirked labor. For all you've done we're happy to call you kin. Should you or yours ever need the help of the Fahlstrom clan, feel free to ask and we'll seek to repay a portion of our debt to you."

Paulus raised the mug to his lips and drank deep, before sitting again. Others could have their say now should they wish it, or bring up concerns or ideas as they saw fit.



((Feel free to comment or post in character (or out of) as you see fit. After the forge area I'll likely begin work on clearing a residential section for us to live in, but that'll still take a while, and I may go prospecting for some ore to work real quick before then. I'd like to find something other than copper to use for trade and armor.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 04, 2009, 01:42:34 pm**

((Invitation to post anything you'd like to say is still open of course.))

15th of Granite

A pair of elves arrived today with mules in tow. They claimed to be from the nation of Micelifidale Nami. It was strange seeing them. They look somewhat physically similar to those we knew at home, but somehow ... more primitive. They were deeply tanned, and their upturned eyes struck me as slightly different. But they seemed friendly, if perhaps a little overly curious of our new home. Pete, in particular seemed agitated about their arrival, but held back strangely while they were here.

Their trade goods were strange as well. I've never known elves to bring metal bars, yet they had a bar of lead and a bar of silver. In addition to those we got some cages and barrels. With tamed lizard and dog inclusive. They were happy to take our stone crafts. And strangely enough some of our prarie dog leather goods. I'd have bought some of their cloth as well, but we've been so busy with moving below that I haven't had time to make more.

8th of Slate

Crush decided to hold a party in our dining hall. Pete and I attended but the others were busy. It was more of a nice casual get together. During it Pete actually came out and told me more about the 'elves' that live in the area. Apparently they are very different from the ones I used to know. According to her they live off the land to an extreme. Though they do make goods and weapons and such, they also do other things. Like hunt sentient creatures for food. Had I known they were cannibals and head-hunters I might have treated them differently, but Pete said it was for the best. They take any sign of weakness very poorly, and dissent is something they look for. If they had thought we'd be suitable food for them they'd have arrived silently and simply attacked us.

He also said that the many of the trade goods they sell are obtained from lost merchants of other races that never made it through their lands. Whether they died because of the elves or because of the wild lands in which they live is never truly known, though many believe that it's the elves themselves that attack them for consumption. Perhaps because of those rumors few are willing to trade with them outright.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **February 04, 2009, 02:19:13 pm**

A short handwritten notice
Dear Grag Fahlstrom,

I have decided against suggesting anything, as it would be quite unreasonable of me to do so, especially when the area is not lent to the kind of plans that I am used to, as we lack a large source of water, and as you know, I was predominantly a fluid engineer. I would, however, like to request a kitchen. I am sure morale would improve if we were supplied with scones, biscuits and crumpets. It is such a shame we cannot trade for tea in these parts, especially since the disaster.

Yrs, Oddbod Godenromlan.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 04, 2009, 05:43:37 pm**

24th of Slate

Ragnar and I were working on clearing the stairwell beneath the barracks and dining hall when we came upon a mineral that cheered my heart. We've struck Magnetite. I'm not sure how large a vein it is, as we were interrupted by the shouts from above. Size doesn't really

matter that much. We still don't have forges up and running. Something which I think should be our next priority. A little explorative mining for some bituminous coal or lignite would also be in order as there simply aren't enough trees to accomodate the burning of vast amounts of them. We'll have to begin importing lumber as soon as possible.

The shouting from above was a large group of migrants. Nearly a full ship-load from the looks of it! They came in single file in a weary and hot train. Though they looked far too tired for comfort a little food, drink and rest I'm sure will go a long way to lifting spirits. Fre returned from up above looking sour as I went up though and it wasn't too long before I found out why. I was able to greet Aardvark personally as he came in, though he looked thinner than last I had seen him. With him came his two 'assistants', a metalsmith and furnace operator, both female and generally hanging around him.

Perhaps I'll go double check that we don't have any cave spider venom secreted anywhere that Fre can find.

Another of the migrants, a planter, came up to me and introduced himself as 'Der Kartoffel', though I waved him away with the vague assurance that I'd meet with him later. He seemed a bit disappointed but that's life. By my count there were twenty four migrants, and four animals, two lambs, a pony colt and a calf. There had been more when they set out but most of the non-pets had been either consumed for food or lost in the jungles. As well, apparently, as five dwarves, one to a poisonous spider, one to a lizardman raid and three to some sort of illness with a high fever. Most unfortunate losses.

With this many new faces around here things'll be crowded. Already I've asked Kolok to make beds with our remaining lumber and will request our temporary dining hall moved up into the dining hall proper. They can pile the stone around the edges of the room for now until we use them or decide of a place to dump them. The extra space below will be used for the barracks until we get quarters set up, which is now second on my priority list behind the smithy. There'll be a lot to do and with the extra help perhaps it's time to get some of the mundane hauling tasks taken care of.

To top it all off one of the migrants, a weaver, starting jumping for joy and babbling as soon as he saw the entrance to our fort and immediately began demanding a clothier workshop be built for him. We'll need to get everyone settled first, then I'll have to see about his request.

((I kid you not... no sooner than he entered the map than *Fey Mood*. Sigh. And a weaver too... sigh.

In any case, there are plenty of immigrants if anyone wants one. Kartoffel you're in, and you Aardvark, I'll see if I can get you and Fre to make up, if not, well, dating your assistants causes problems. ;) I'll get profiles posted probably tomorrow or so.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **February 04, 2009, 09:17:40 pm**

((Hows the water situation in the fort?))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 05, 2009, 12:59:57 pm**

((Non-existant at the moment Pete, but I know there is water west of us somewhere, in the form of a cave river. I made sure the map had some sort of water source.))

3rd of Felsite

We've finally got a clothier shop up and running and it was instantly claimed by our fey companion. He, or was it a she, I'll have to double check that, instantly went gathering all the pig tail cloth we had, two bolts of it, and stood in the workshop screaming for more. Three bolts of pig tail cloth? I think we have some pig tail lying around unprocessed still, we'll have to get a farmer's workshop up and running, and then process it into cloth still, but we might be able to get it done before someone goes crazy.

And kills the person shouting in our bedroom/barracks while we're trying to sleep.

Apparently one of the children is missing and when a search was sent out for it, was found up on the surface being chased mercilessly by a batman from the chasm. Kolok dealt with it swiftly, putting his axe to good use and we've retrieved the child into the safe confines of our fortress. An engraver that was working on our entrance spotted them.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 05, 2009, 06:35:03 pm**

3rd of Hematite

The bite of her pick on stone was almost comforting to her as she worked her way through the stone. It felt good to be working by herself, Paulus up above working on the stockpile records. It allowed her time to think and work out her own concerns. She'd been quiet, withdrawn and even hesitant since Datan had died, and seeing the migrants arriving hadn't helped. Fre too had been disappointed to find Aardvark in the company of his new 'assistants', both well proportioned in comparison to the almost skinny frame of their cook. But at least she had known he was coming. Datan would never come. There was no need for her to get her hopes up, nor to scan the horizon for the possibility of seeing her lover again.

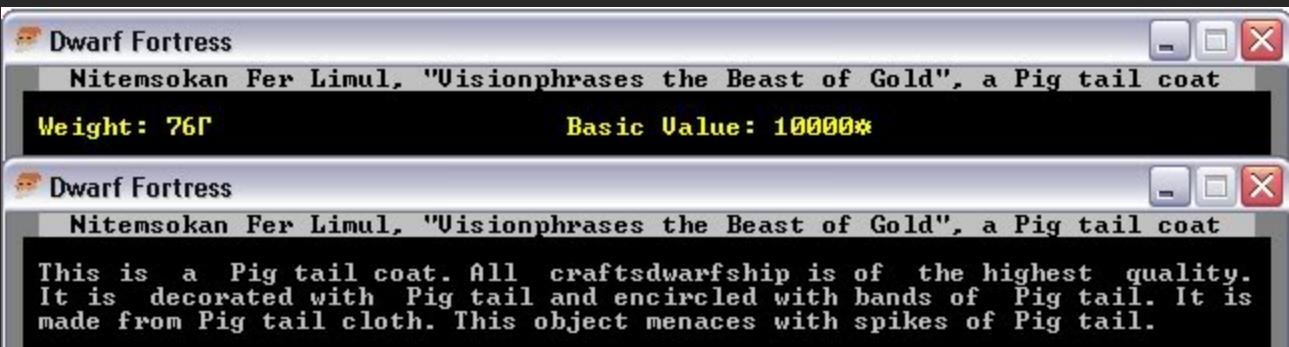
Another chunk of stone came loose before her. And again she swung the pick with vigor.

He'd been helping dig others out of the rubble of their erstwhile home when an aftershock had hit, breaking off a portion of the tower with it to strike the ground far below, and taking with it a half dozen dwarves trying to help their friends and family. That wasn't taking into account those that might have been alive in the rubble.

The limestone gave way before her. In the darkness of the mines she cared little for what she hit as she worked her way through her turmoil. It wasn't until few more paces that she realized that she was sweating. She touched the surface of the rock and realized that it wasn't the rough surface that limestone had, but the broken edges of obsidian. And that the stone around her was distinctly warm to the touch.

It gave her some small pleasure to begin her trek back through the tunnels she had carved to inform Paulus that she'd found a pocket of Magma beneath the sands. How to harness it would be another matter. One that she would happily let him worry about. As she entered into the now-crowded entrance hall the sight of bustling dwarves filled her view. Then something struck her, it was noticeably quieter of late.

It wasn't until she went above to see Paulus at the table with a spread of vellum in front of him that it occurred to her the weaver might have finished. The article he had made lay gracing the table next to her friend as she walked up to look at it. For some reason it provided a small amount of comfort to her.



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 06, 2009, 01:41:11 pm**

16th of Hematite

Well, we've had a considerable amount of good news lately. The pig tail coat that our weaver made is truly marvelous. It's normally drab brown fibers almost glow with an inner lustre that makes it seem almost like gold cloth, were that actually possible. The weaver claims that shortly before he arrived he had a dream in which he saw what he needed to do and that it had been send by Urdim Silveryhelped the Bejeweled Tax. Kind of a funny name for a god but I've spoken with Pete about the gods of this land and he's told us about many of them. With us being new arrivals and having lost contact with our old gods perhaps they seek our worship and strength? I remember Kashez mentioning that the greater the number of worshippers gods have the stronger they are. Though they are limited in their spheres of influence as well as geographically.

This Urdim, according to Pete, is patron of wealth and fortresses. Perhaps I shall have to pay him my respects.

In other news we've had two caravans arrive. The tribesmen have arrived as well as strange winged humans, calling themselves Avari. They are the most disturbing of the bunch, though seeing seven foot tall dark skinned humans with spears is somewhat intimidating as well. At least they seem to mean well, despite the... strange nature of their food. Seriously... they brought spider meat, scorpion meat and some other forms of insect meat to trade. Anyways, the Avari have come with pack animals, though they themselves haven't said a word to us. They merely observe. I'm not sure if they're judging us or are spying on us, as they refuse to offer any of their goods to trade. I've offered them some of our stone instruments as a gift, which they've accepted, but they've still said nothing.

The tribesmen on the other hand were more than willing to trade. They brought some metal bars and a large quantity of wood, which we bought, as well as the food, despite it's questionable nature, and barrels, an anvil and a few bins of cloth. There was much we could have gotten as well, but we simply lacked the goods needed to persuade them to part with it. They grinned with their wide smiles, bright white teeth a contrast to the rest of them. I think I could get to like these humans, strange as they are.

While we were trading Pete apparently scared away a lizardman thief that was trying to sneak in. I think Oddbodd had been chased by another batman and lured it into our tunnels where it was caught by a cage trap. We'll have to find something to do with these creatures we're capturing.

((I think the Avarii trading is an oft mentioned bug in LL, though I'm not sure what solutions I can enact without regenning a world. Technically they came, with animals and goods on the animals but were not offering any goods to trade. Any suggestions will be well taken. If not, I'll see what they do. The message says they've left, but they're still hanging around the trade post. Hopefully they'll not go beserk or I may have to rig up a siege engine in front of the place.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 09, 2009, 01:44:10 pm**

19th of Malachite

Ragnar and I have finally begun work on the section designated as the housing halls, but were surprised to find another large cluster of Magnetite in the area. We've found so much that I don't think we'll be needing this section so I've let the rooms be finished as planned. The particular odor of the iron ore I find strangely refreshing and suspect that others may enjoy it as well, if not, there are rooms in limestone and kaolinite also.

In order to keep up with the sheer volumes of ore that we've dug I've finished planning the magma channel to feed the forges and had it dug out without mishap. We'll be skimming the top of the magma bubble and letting it run down to collect in a channel on the north and east sides of our forge room. It give the room somewhat of a peculiar glow, with the molten stone and the white walls. I'm in the process of setting up the layout for the workshops there. Three forges, once we get sufficient anvils, one each for Aardvark to work armor, Pete to work weapons and crafts and Oddbodd and others to tinker with making his amusing brass furniture and whatnot. There will be four smelters to process the raw stock and two glass furnaces for future use.

It's nice to see things coming together and, to be honest, it's nice to not have to rely on charcoal for processing normal metals. Just steel. Speaking of which, there are two woodburners set up in there as well to process coal. The fumes and smoke rise up the stairway in the room to the sandy storage area above and seep out of the soil from there. The near constant wind across the savanna ensures that the smoke isn't overly visible but it can be smelled and I suspect animals may be avoiding the immediate area now. No harm there I suppose.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **February 09, 2009, 02:32:48 pm**

Magma?
Magma.
Magmafalls.
Magma lakes fed by magmafalls.
GIANT MAGMA-SPEWING DRAGONS MADE OF BRASS.

I love the way that everyone else is working hard and Oddbodd is just making brass stuff and being generally eccentric.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **February 09, 2009, 04:43:52 pm**

Aardvarks Journal

20th of Malachite
Magma? Finaly I can work without the ever present lack of coal and charcoal. I can now give our new home better armor than Doremal could ever dream of. Our military will be wearing shining suits of steel armor that will sow the seed of fear into any army that tries to force us out of our homes. It is also great to be back in the safer tunnels. Our trekking through the wilds was long and strenous. I can feel that my skills has suffered from it, but with enough work I could become a master of the craft again.

I still wonder why Fre wouldn't greet me when we arrived, and she has been kind of distant ever since. Hopefully it will not be long untill her feelings towards returns to how it was.

Aardvark

1st of Galena

The upper floor of the housing complex has been completed and we've begun moving beds in. This should help alleviate the overly crowded front room as we begin spreading out. I made some of our rooms a little larger than others. I know I shouldn't be partial, but it's hard not to carve out a few more feet if space permits. We original seven have gotten our rooms squared away and even have some furniture installed as work continues on the other rooms. Kolok is busy working directing the woodcutters above and working away in the carpentry shop, making beds mostly, but also some bins and barrels to accomodate our burgeoning supplies.

Crush has been helping some with masonry, but we've had several newcomers volunteer for masonry duties as well, so he's also been doing half a dozen other things. Even the metalworks is up and going strong now, with production beginning in earnest on steel and melting copper ore down. All of the metal workers are busy smelting and whatnot. Aardvark seems particularly glad to be here, and overjoyed about our stable fuel situation. I'll admit, that was one of the hardest parts about Dorenemal. We could have done much more had we only more fuel for the forges. All four smelters as well as our woodburners are running near non-stop. I may have to expand our stockpiles above. Or get more bins made quick.

The avarii 'merchants' remain in our main entry, as though content to simply observe our daily routine. They've made no effort to trade, and though I thought they might leave once or twice by now that doesn't seem to be the case.

Pete has decided to throw a party as well, raiding our food supplies. In part I think it's an effort of hers to get the rest of us 'indigenized' faster. She's serving those tarantula's the tribesmen seem so fond of, and some other equally questionable foods like lungfish. Apparently, it's supposed to be eaten by holding the tail above your mouth and ingesting it from below. Don't ask me why. I find myself missing true 'sea' food though.

The Observations of Oddbodd.
The Avarii merchants are still here, watching us. They have not eaten since they arrived, nor have they commenced trade. I suspect that they are fiendishly complex automatons, tho' not of any mortal or indeed worldly make. I doubt that they run on conventional mechanics, rather that they are powered by some celestial (or demonic) force that sustains a physical construct. Our fuel situation is rather favourable, and i have been able to cast quite a few fine pieces of furniture from that greatest of alloys, brass. The others regard me as somewhat eccentric for this, and it is rather hard for me to explain Olonkulet to them, destroyed as it is and reluctant to talk of it as I am. Oh, and Pete decided to have a party. We ate spiders and lungfish. The spiders have a rather unusual taste, and the fish were a little odd. I preferred the fresh sea-food at the Waterbore.

24th of Galena

Kolok set down his hammer and chisel and stepped away from his latest finished bed. His practiced eye could still pick out the flaws in the wood, the mismatched grains and bad joins, but it was functional and that's what mattered. He was getting better he knew, but there simply wasn't time to take days or weeks on each bed. Nobody really liked sleeping on the floor. A runner came pounding in, slightly out of breath.

"Kolok, Deduk says you're wanted above. Bring your axe."

Kolok merely nodded and reached over to the wall where he had laid it while he worked.

"Trouble?"

"Not as such, no. Best to go see for yourself."

He passed Paulus, Ragnar, Crush and the new engraver smoothing the entryway on his way up and nodded briefly in greeting. They were busily involved with their work and if it wasn't really trouble there was little reason to disturb them.

When he got above ground the fierce glare of the sun made him squint as he scanned the horizon for Deduk, the other woodcutter. Catching a glimpse of him to the east and south he made his way over.

"Ye wanted me?"

"Aye, saw somethin' peculiar down south a ways. Thought it might be worth checking out. Some almighty noise coming from there, sounds of a fight."

Kolok nodded, and warily stalked off. He knew the area well enough by now to know that south meant near the entrance to the chasm. Any manner of trouble could come from there. He gingerly touched the back of his neck where a portion of his flesh was missing, a great lump of it simply gone, leaving only scarred tissue and a numb sensation. The spider poison had deadened his flesh in the area and it had become infected. And while he had eventually recovered, where he had been bitten had died and sloughed off and had not regrown. It was a grim reminder to be careful.

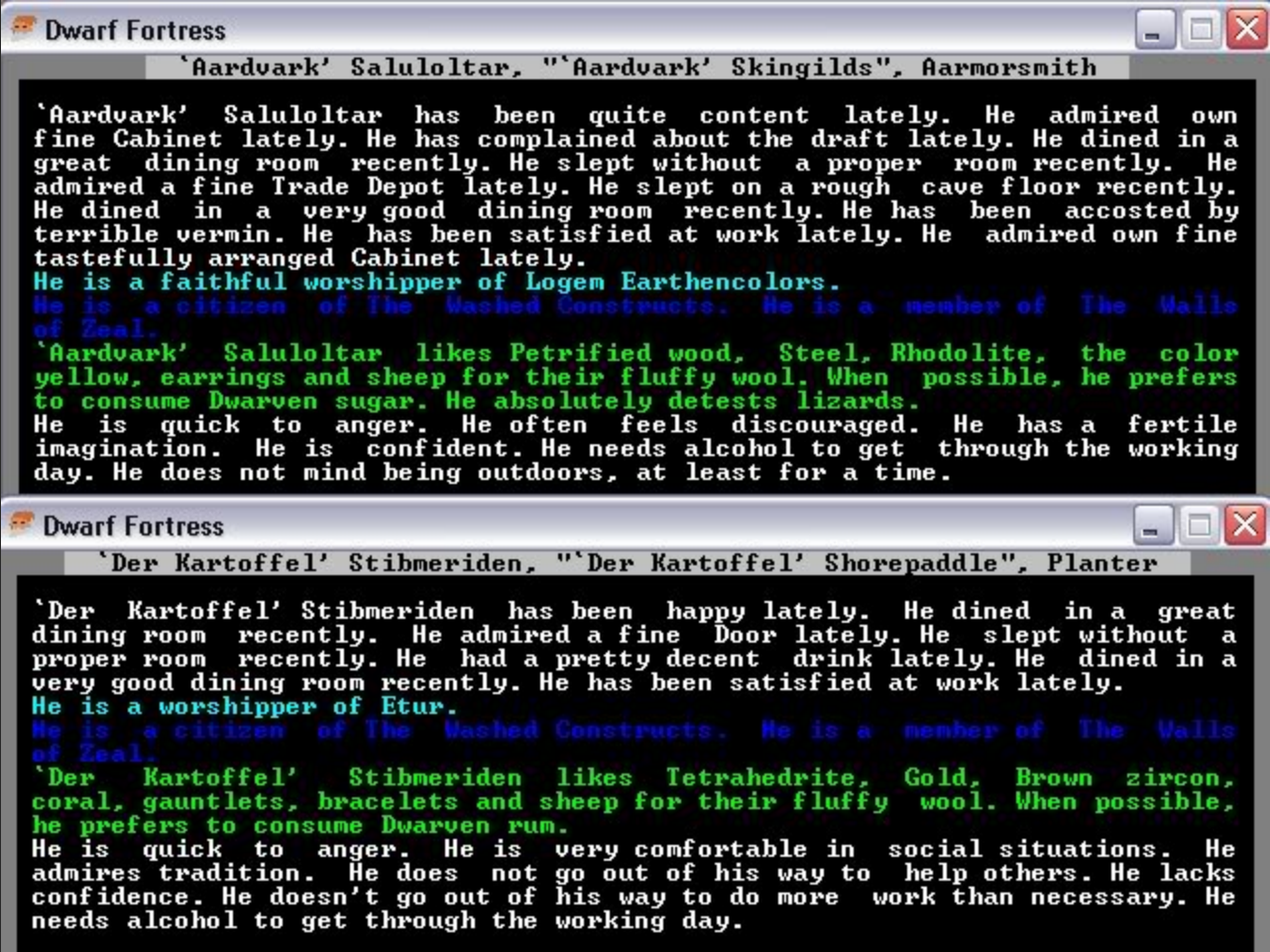
He saw no signs of life until he was nearly at the site of the ambush, now more than a year gone. Faint stirrings of a large creature in the underbrush were audible as well as an periodic keening cry, like a horse in pain. Gripping his axe in his calloused hands he grimly stalked out from tree cover to see. On the ground several paces away lay a full grown pegasus, dripping blood from numerous gashes and cuts. One wing lay cocked at an odd angle and several of the feathers lay scattered towards the slope nearby. It's chest rose and fell which indicated it was breathing, but a terrible gash on it's back along it's spine indicated that it would not likely recover.

As he approached it must have smelled him coming. It's head rose and turned towards him, panic filled eyes wide and nostrils flared. With a whinny it rose tentatively to it's wobbling feet, one leg nearly buckling underneath it. With a mighty push it beat it's wings and launched itself into the air and away from Kolok. Not a stone's throw up it must have passed out from the pain and came plummeting back to earth to lay immobile on the ground, neck snapped to one side. Kolok's first instinct was pity, but caution soon overcame him and he headed up the slope to scout around some more before making sure all was well. It was there he came upon the scene of the fight, blood splattered liberally around the trampled remains of both a giant rat and a batman. No other enemies turned up in his search and the other two creatures were visibly deteriorating in the hot afternoon sun.

He sighed, shaking his head. Nothing to do here but salvage what could be salvaged. Sheathing his axe he walked over to the remains of the dead pegasus and with difficulty hoisted it upon his shoulders, to walk slowly back. Horse meat was edible, so he saw no reason why pegasus should not be. It would be a shame to let it go to waste, though it would have been a greater shame for such a magnificent creature to be crippled and maimed in such a dangerous land. It wasn't quite like hunting... but it came close. At least it wasn't a spider.

((True story. I'd intended for him to go put it out of it's misery, but when he got close it took off, passed out and crashed in a heap, dead.

Oh, and I realize I've neglected to put up profiles for Aardvark and Der Kartoffel, so here you go. Two angry, angry dwarves.))



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 10, 2009, 05:28:27 pm**

((Oh, and here's another thing I've apparently overlooked that's been requested several times.

The incomplete map of the main floors of Dorenemal.

<http://mkv25.net/dfma/map-4616-dorenemal>

For those who don't want to wade through crafts and corpses to check it out in adventure mode.

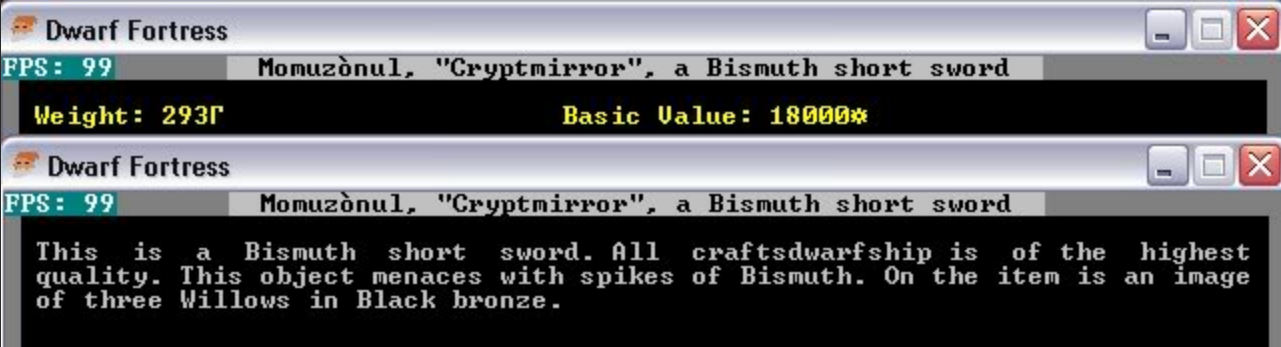
Heh... I just noticed that there are four goblin corpses in the lakes near the upper east gate. They must have been caught by the spring thaw of the lakes.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 11, 2009, 03:52:28 pm**

10th of Limestone

I had just come up from beginning an exploratory shaft off near the dining hall, looking for the supposed water source that Pete assures me exists, and that he's apparently concerned we have none of. On the bright side, I've found a cluster of white chalcedony and another of almandine. When I'm standing in the dark resting for my next bit I swear I can almost hear a far off rush of water.

In any case, I went to check how our ore levels in the forge room was when I noticed that Endok had just claimed one of our forges for work. I asked her what she was working on, since nothing had been requested and she simply didn't respond, just headed up to bring down a heavy bar of Bismuth and then another of Black Bronze before beginning to work. I suspected that she'd been inspired to make something and left it at that. Nearly four days later she showed up again, exhausted looking, sooty and disheveled and with sort of a vacant expression. Claimed that she'd forgotten the last several days worth of time. But in her hands she held possibly the most magnificent weapon I'd ever seen. She calls it Momuzonul, or Cryptmirror, and though there is no reflection visible on it's pink-tinged white surface the edge of the blade glints in the light and shines like the sun. The hilt is made of Black bronze with some decorations in it, and strangely enough it bears not her mark but, according to Pete, the mark of Etur, god of fire and metals. Only he, I suppose, would know how to make such a masterful weapon out of bismuth, a normally unworkable metal.



I have decided that it shall be placed in the barracks to inspire our soldiers, should we decide that professional ones are needed. For the time being, Ragnar, Kolok, myself and Fre shall suffice.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 11, 2009, 07:30:52 pm**

17th of Limestone

Paulus carefully closed the door to his room, trying hard not to trip on the stone still lying in the hallways, he couldn't help but overhear the conversation from the room across the way. It wasn't that he was trying to pry, it's that the whole of it seemed to be played out at significantly elevated volumes.

'I never said that!'

'Oh, aye, ye never said it, but that don't make it true!'

'Yer puttin' words into my mouth again!'

'Ya know what? Fine! Go back to yer artifact-craftin' wench! See if I care! Just get out of my room!'

'I'm gettin'. And fer the last time, we're just passing acquaintances!'

Aardvark ducked into the hallway just in time for a loud thump to sound on the door behind him, followed by several more. He saw his friend and merely shrugged angrily.

"Bloody women. Can't live with 'em. Can't shoot 'em."

Paulus merely nodded non-committally as Aardvark stalked off heading for the forges.

He sighed. Perhaps he should try getting a room in a quieter location. With the new migrants space was still at a premium and though rooms were being worked on, it wasn't enough to keep people from sleeping on the floor still. He looked at the stack of vellum in his hand and remembered he'd been going to the depot to trade with the merchants. Shaking his head yet again, he began picking his way through the cluttered halls.

Journal entry

The caravan and liason have arrived again. Pete met with the liason while I spoke with the traders from Shellhelms. It seemed that their route had done well this year and they'd brought much of what we requested. They had a very large supply of meat and drink of which we acquired all of it, giant cave spider meat notwithstanding. They also brought a decent amount of wood as well as metal bars. Some of it appeared to be a metal I was as of yet unfamiliar with but they explained that it was called Celestrium, and that, though pretty enough on it's onw, was best used for making alloys. Apparently Pete was familiar with it and had requested as much as possible. It was regretablely vastly more expensive than expected and I was only able to purchase all the unrefined ore as well as only a single bar.

All of our trade goods went towards the trade, including our set of copper armor. With our smithy up and running it seemed pointless to have it when we could have steel armor made easily enough. With negotiations concluded I left to go update our records but a short while later Pete poked her head up into the dining hall where I was wont to do paperwork and said we had more goods to trade and that I was to try and get the remaining Celestrium. Apparently she'd learned of the lack of goods and had some of our caged goblin thieves let free.

Right into Kolok's axe.

Instant trade goods, and more free cages. Seemed like it worked well for us. Not so well for the goblins of course. In the end we did manage to get two more bars. The last was simply out of our trade range, as well as many other useful goods that I'd have liked to get. Ah well, there's always next year.

P.S. I'm afraid Fre and Aardvark have had a falling out. Aardvark has only left his armorsmithing forge to eat, drink and sleep. Fre has insisted I set up some archery targets for her to practice on, and apparently threatened our resident bonecrafter to use his bones as bolts should he not make her some practice bolts pronto.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **February 11, 2009, 11:22:48 pm**

Awww, have they developed a grudge?

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 12, 2009, 01:00:43 pm**

((No, no... nothing like that. They're just passing acquaintances though. I've actually never had a marriage yet. Perhaps it's because I simply don't let people idle. Pretty much ever. Even back at Dorenemal with over two hundred dwarves we typically didn't have more than two or three, and one was the mayor (on health care only) and others were frequently farmers waiting for the change of season.))

3rd of Timber

The rock before him fell from it's place to the ground with a dull thud. It was a sizeable chunk, certainly useable stone, though not particularly useful as they still had far too much of it. He caught a glint of light from behind him, off the recently mined out opal cluster he had found. Pretty stones, though the uncut gems looked more like lumps of glass than the typical cut versions. Calmly he swung his pick into the rock in front of him, burying it deep and lifting the handle to loosen it for another swing. A second swing bit into the stone and with a surprising crack the piece tore loose and fell.

The surprising part was that it fell away from him into blackness and with a loud splash fell into a swiftly running stream, lapping a little water onto the narrow shaft where he stood. Paulus smiled. They'd been closer to a water source than he thought, though it hadn't been a simple matter to find it. Happiness turned to dismay when other sounds began echoing from the hole in front of him and in the dim backlight he could make out pale grotesque figures climbing out of the river towards the source of warmth and light.

He stumbled back a little ways, bumping into the wall behind him as frogmen poured out of the river towards him. Their sharp white teeth filled the pink flesh around the mouth and their near white skin and large bulbous eyes shone brightly with slime and water. He buried his pick into the skull of the nearest one and felt the bone give way, dropping the creature to the ground like the stones he'd been hewing. Three more frogmen surrounded him, attempting to grasp and bite with their slippery hands. One managed to get a bite in on his leg, but a backhand blow knocked it loose, stunning it on the ground. The melee became general then, but the hard-knotted frame of the dwarf gave way less easily than the soft flesh of the river dwellers. Two olm-men, slimy worm-like creatures with protuberant snouts instead of faces emerged from the river, perhaps more out of curiosity than actual hunger or ferocity. But sensing the blood and food they attacked as well.

Another frog went down, a pick-sized hole in his chest leaking out his lifeblood and the dwarf gradually lost ground, allowing himself to be pushed back towards the tunnel he'd dug recently, giving far better than taking. It was appalling work, fending off slippery appendages and teeth, but he managed it well. His previous experience paid off well, and he hadn't gone soft. Soon the creatures lay dead or dying on the floor of the tunnel and no more issued forth from the river, though more could be heard.

He stomped back into the light, decidedly unhappy at having been attacked where he presumed he would be reasonably safe. Shouting at the first dwarf he saw he ordered a door installed on the tunnel and it to be sealed for the time being.

((We've struck cave river, but haven't cleared it out all the way yet. Volunteers for the remainder of the river creatures feel free to speak up. I'll have Aardvark bang out some steel armor for you before I send you in. Wouldn't want the half a dozen snakemen to poison you. More other stuff as well, perhaps about a dozen left in all. So I'll take one or two volunteers.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 12, 2009, 03:14:09 pm**

25th of Timber

Ragnar and I had just finished clearing out the malachite vein just this side of the stairwell on the forgehall when we were heading back up through it. We arrived in time to see Oddbodd, a feverish look in his eye, claim a metalsmith's forge and begin shouting:

"I must have brass!", "Give me brass or give me death!" or "Oddbodd needs Brass badly!"

I had to go inform him that we still had two bars left upstairs in the bins when I'd done my last inventory and that he was welcome to it. He immediately dashed off to get some as Ragnar smiled, shaking her head as we went up to get a drink.

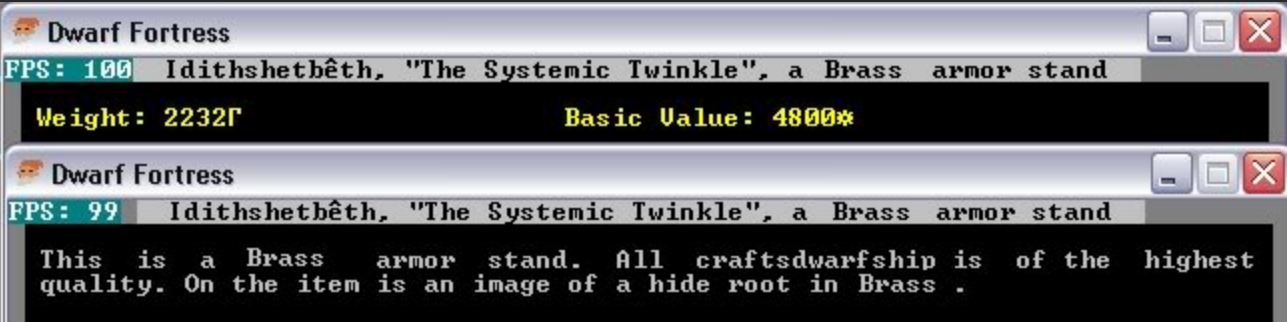
"The lad's simply no' right i' t'head."

Grinning heartily and looking at our dirt and dust covered clothing I slapped her on the back and said: "Enough people could say the same about us. Let's go get that drink ye promised me. I'll concede yer point. Ye got me on strength. But give me credit where it's due... I'm faster."

"Ach, I suppose so. Still, that's a point fer me I suppose. Maybe I'll hafta get me axe out and clear some o' dem river rats out ta even things up, eh?"

We left in time to see Oddbodd returning, a single bar of Brass cradled in his arms almost reverently.

After our break he was eager to show us what he'd made. It was indeed a beauty. I've rarely seen pieces like it, even at Dorenemal. It almost reminded me of Draco's chainmail piece, but deeper in hue, and strangely ... shiny.



((Ok, ok... technically Oddbodd, your character is in love with Copper, not Brass. And technically the actual construction was done in Copper as well, but with your character I don't mind making a little embellishment since I can't choose his initial preferences. The whole screaming for Brass (copper) thing was true as well, sort of. ;) So... what would you like to do with it? It's currently the focal piece of our barracks, but it's your call. And by the way, you're now a legendary Metalsmith. Congrats. I've always wanted one of those. Masterwork metal furniture here we come!))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 12, 2009, 05:30:37 pm**

25th of Moonstone

Perhaps I'll have to re-assess my thoughts about Crush. He's been very helpful most of the time, and though he has no true profession he's done a bit of everything. Weaving, farming, masonry and recently stonework, smoothing our floors and walls. One of the migrants was an engraver by trade and the pair managed our upper entryway, but when Ragnar and I decided they were too slow we pitched in to help. It's not like the smelters will be idle any time soon. In fact, they're so backlogged we'll have time to smooth an awful lot before they need more ore.

But today he decided to throw another party. I'm wondering if he feels guilty about it, as I wasn't invited. Can't say I'm too surprised. I've never been one for parties and crowds, though Ragnar, Kolok, Oddbodd and Pete all made an appearance. And several empty drink barrels, and a lot of noise.

We'll be spending most of the winter polishing up the place and working to get everyone settled, so I'm hoping for a quiet winter. Fre has been up in the barracks shooting bone bolts at the targets almost as fast as they're made. Aardvark has been working non-stop at the forges, and after working through his initial frustrations I think he's beginning to get back into the groove of things. Of course, he's only been working with copper, with the intention of melting it all down again when he's done. We don't need that much practice armor, and steel is better. Our supplies are beginning to grow and that makes me glad.

I've sketched the entrance to our home below in it's rough state. We'll see how much we can get done over the winter.



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **February 12, 2009, 05:43:33 pm**

Crush, river clearer, reporting for duty!

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 12, 2009, 05:47:15 pm**

((Thank you Crush. I'll see to it that you and Ragnar are outfitted properly and give those frogmen, olmmen and snakemen a proper thrashing. What is your weapon of choice? Oh, and what on earth would you like me to do with your microcline block? Just store it in your room and forbid it? Or make you a workshop that only you can use out of it?

Anyways, I'll be out of town for a few days, so I've done a few extra posts. Have a good weekend all.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **February 12, 2009, 05:48:40 pm**

((I'll go with a mace, preferably. And the block is to be the first construction placed in the first big project that comes along.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **February 12, 2009, 06:08:22 pm**

((Fre's got your back. She needs an outlet for her anger...))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 12, 2009, 06:13:05 pm**

((Done and Done. Three will be plenty for the denizens of the river. Perhaps we'll go hunting in the chasm next... heh. We could even all go, I'll mine the path out, Fre can get fliers and we'll hit all the odd pockets of critters that bog down my FPS.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **February 13, 2009, 08:48:17 am**

Keep the armour stand in the barracks.
It should stop people tantruming so much when an olm eats their babies.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 17, 2009, 02:12:57 pm**

7th of Obsidian

It's been a busy winter. Nearly everyone has been working non-stop, either preparing trade-goods, crafts, furniture that is still needed for the bedrooms, or food. The metalworkers have been smelting ore as fast as they safely can and have much to show for it. We've got burgeoning piles of steel, iron, pig iron and copper up above as well as a smattering of other ores.

Ragnar, Crush, Olon and I have been smoothing the stone in order to make things a bit more presentable. I was the one to smooth the stone around the Trade Depot, as apparently the others were uncomfortable having the Avarii merchants watching their every move. They don't seem that terrible to me and radiate a strange sense of ... sincerity. Despite not having spoken much. Or at all that I can remember.

Ragnar and I also dug out a lever room north of the entry hall, to use for our defenses. We were fortunate. While excavating we found a large cluster of rubies. At first the largish red lumps were almost indistiguishable from the bauxite, but it didn't take too long to notice the irregularities in the stone. We expanded to room to take advantage of our good fortune. While removing the floor for one of our defensive bridges, Ragnar strangely decided to do it from the opposite side and was trapped when the last slab of stone fell into the room beneath. I had to design a bridge to get her out, which she gladly helped build.

Everyone is working well, and even Fre commented that the entryway looks good. Of course she said this as she was getting a stack of goblin bone bolts from the ammo bin.

Pete also held a quick discussion with the smelters on alloy techniques known to the dwarves of Zilirezum. There exist several known alloys using celestrium, including Celestial steel. But another which interested me personally was a one which was made using aluminum, steel and a great deal of celestrium. Apparently it greatly reduces weight and allows for greater movement. Something I feel is vital to proper sword combat techniques. I think he calls it Anurite, but it's incredibly difficult to obtain. Other apparent alloys include an alloy used for bolts, too brittle for weapons or armor but the fragmentation lends itself well to ammo. It uses gold, silver and celestrium. Another is Selenesite, highly valuable and valued both for it's lustre and surprising utility in armormaking. It requires a decent amount of gold and some celestrium. The last celestrium alloy that Pete mentioned was Terronite, and made of tin, copper and celestrium. It's useful and easy to obtain the base metals, but not as strong as some other forms. Nonetheless it's hardness does exceed that of even steel.

Aardvark was more interested, of course, in their technique of further hardening steel using ash. The result, known as High Steel among them, tends to be considerably harder than normal steel, though is also somewhat more brittle.

(Just a brief overview of currently pertinent alloys and such. There are others that may show up that I will cover as they are introduced.)

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 18, 2009, 04:53:05 pm**

21st of Obsidian

The two winged Avar looked out from their places of meditation. They silently looked at each other and a multitude of words flowed between them without a sound. Their clothing, a light tan, almost white, hung on their frames with meticulous care. One wore a few pieces of leather, a coat to protect from the elements and sandals to protect the feet. The other wore more leather, otter, mule and dog. The shirt that clung tightly to her frame was made out of supple giant tarantula chitin, as were her sandals. They sat cross-legged on the floor in a meditative position, one they were long-since accustomed to assuming. They'd been known to spend months in that position, and prior to the great release, even years. Imprisonment had taught them much as a race. Patience was one of the things they had learned. Or at least most of them. Anger was the other.

Thankfully not all of them.

The dwarves were known to them nearly fully now, and the pair had decided it was time to set and bind the geas. The awakening of terrible purpose, of devotion to a cause.

One of them was smoothing the floors near the depot when they first reached out to him with their minds. He was the one that radiated order. The one they had been told to find. Erane reached out a hand to Fiya and squeezed it ever so slightly. A physical touch that gave more than reassurance. Fiya concentrated, focusing on the dwarf and sending out the greeting in her thoughts.

"In the name of Order I greet you, son of the mountain. By the eternal warmth of Zirulundonir may you long live."

She had expected a response, but found none. She reached out again with her mind and found the presence of the dwarf, but when she tried to inspect it closer walls blocked her way, as hard as stone. She retreated in confusion and spoke with Erane again: "Sister, how can we fulfill our purpose with these iblith if we cannot speak with them?"

The prompt response and feeling of reassurance came. "The burden is placed upon you. You will find a way."

She returned her gaze to the dwarf and to her surprise he no longer worked but looked curiously at her, one eyebrow raised. He nodded once and returned to his work, calmly and slowly, but with occasional quick furtive glaces in their direction. He finished the piece of stone he was working on and stood, stretching his back from long work on the floor.

"About time I take a break I think." he said aloud, to no one in particular, and strode unabashed to sit against one of the pillars holding up the depot. His eyes closed as if resting, but his breathing did not slow.

Fiya tried again, closing her eyes and focusing.

"Greetings we give to you, child of stone. Can you hear me?"

She waited and again no response. She was about to try again when her ears caught the faintest of whispers.

"I can hear you lass. What do the Faenari-iyal want of us?"

Surprised her eyes opened and her wings behind her stirred as if she might suddenly take flight. Ruffling her feathers and crossing her wing-tips again she resumed meditative pose.

"Truly you can hear us then? How is it you know of us?"

Another slight pause and then quietly. "Aye, I can hear you, though as if from a great distance, and only faintly. As for the rest, well, I too am not only what I seem to be."

"Then we apologize for the deception that we have maintained. As you may have guessed then, merchants we are not. But explain your riddle to us. We had thought that such knowledge of our name before the imprisonment had all but perished from the records of your ... race."

The thought that had been sent had contained in it a note of condescension, as of a superior looking down on a lesser, but despite this his reponse was calm.

"We are a mortal race, yes, but our gods are not and they still deign to speak to some from time to time, when occasion or need arises."

"Ah, so you ARE one of the appointed."

"So it would seem."

"Then I am vessel for a message which is sent for you."

"Say on then. I hear and listen."

"That you were sent here as we were I no longer doubt, but you should know the specifics. I shall use imagery as it conveys what is necessary in a faster fashion."

Paulus nodded then relaxed into the wall supporting him as images flashed into his awareness and he saw The war from it's inception.

In the beginning the universe was, and was not, for it was empty and void. Then in a supreme act the void was ripped asunder and matter sprang into being. With it came immaterial things, beings of thought and action. Intelligences that saw the chaos that had been created, and with it their own creation. These intelligences were beings of Power and began to organize and order the chaos they had found, and in so doing wrought more than they had intended, for other beings of Power sprang up to oppose them. So were the gods of Order and Chaos formed.

Order formed worlds and galaxies, while chaos sought to destroy and lay waste to what they had created, for it was anti-thetical to them. One such place was Smaksmo Udo, the Universes of Soul. Chaos took hold and the earth boiled, a smoking billowing sphere travelling through space, but Order took it and carefully cooled the fires until water condensed from the clouds, cooling the earth and creating rivers, lakes and oceans. They created life in an attempt to unbalance their foes and so created the immortal races.

The Avatars and Avarii were their children. In a twisted parody the forces of Chaos did the same, creating Chaos lords and Demons, and the war began anew, forces and their children fighting on the cooling planet. The immortal races did not age but could be killed, and to tilt the balance in their favor the gods of chaos created the first undead from the battlefields of the infant planet. The forces of order were driven back by the dark tide and might have lost had not a new force intervened. In their constant struggle neither Order nor Chaos considered the forces of balance and neutrality and they worked now to restore the imbalance. The younger races were created, some more for good, others for evil, but still immortal. Avari, goblins, elves, and others. Then further still the mortal races were created to help the balance, dwarves and humans among them. These living races were hated and hunted by the undead, but valor and skill won out where force could not. The undead were thrown back, maintaining an uneasy balance. And the world entered the first age. Other creations came to light then as well, lying dormant in the earth, hidden snares and and pitfalls for the new races to discover. Some ugly and evil, others less so, but then were discovered the first dragons, and titans, the constructs of metal and great beasts that roamed the earth.

The battle began in earnest again, the gods taking less of a part directly as they moved their wars on to other planes of combat, content to watch and occasionally help their children. The forces of creation quickly gained an advantage again as the demons struck terror in the mortal races that the undead could not best. And in an act of defiance the gods of order struck at the demons themselves, raining molten metal from the skies and imprisoning and sealing their enemies deep in the earth. Chaos too struck a hearty blow, banishing the Avarii from the surface. His vision focused on a portion of the world, the mountains where the two Avarii and the dwarves now resided had once been a mighty stronghold of order. Paulus saw an ancient demon attack with the forces of chaos and the ensuing carnage covered the mountains. The demon, a lietenant of significant power, lay waste to the inhabitants, avarii, dwarf, elf, human and kobold alike, until a blue blazing meteor struck him and many of his minions in a flash, trapping him in the earth beneath. His vision expanded again as he saw time pass.

Their elder children soon began to fade, unable to keep pace with the younger races and for a time Avatars and Chaos Lords faded from the earth. Peace gradually was restored and order regained a semblance of strength.

It was with the awakening of one of the Elder demons by the goblins that the war was rekindled and soon the gods of chaos had been invoked again and their attentions turned again to the planet they had helped to create.

As his vision faded to blackness he heard the voice again, from far away, but with a melodic timbre.

"And so we find ourselves once more in the struggle. But much has changed. The Avatar and avarii, long imprisoned have been altered and no longer serve any master but their own ideals. There are few of us now who seek out our old allies and renew the bonds once forged, and fewer still of our allies remember or haven't been corrupted themselves. The kobolds and elves have degenerated into savagery. The humans are an individual lot, as are the dwarves now. Some serving order and others chaos. For this reason we have been careful. And observant. And the forces of chaos are loose again, or quickly becoming so. We feared the worst when we heard of your settlement here. We had concern that you had been tainted and were seeking to undo Damel Werecloisters' imprisonment."

The name sent an icy shudder through the dwarf's spine, but he did not know why.

"We see now that you are not here to do so willingly, though if you are not careful that may happen in any case. We urge you to take precautions and will do our best to guide and help where we may do so without attracting attention. That above all we must do. Were our people even to hear of us we fear little good would come of it."

A final whisper in response indicated that the dwarf would keep silent on the matter and he stood, brushing off the dust and said to no one in particular. "Best I get back to work. Stone's not going to smooth itself."

And the two avarii in the depot looked as they had these past many months, unruffled in expression and almost entirely unmoving, except for the slightest of smiles that graced one of their faces.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 18, 2009, 07:28:33 pm**

1st of Granite

A new year has dawned again. There were considerably more of us but we easily fit into our dining hall which we've begun smoothing out now. There was plenty of food and drink to go around as well and to begin the festivities I stood and thanked everyone for the hard work that's been put into Onol Lened.

Then I had Oddbodd stand and take a bow as creator of Iditshethbeth and invited everyone to go look at it's new resting place in the armory, right next to Cryptmirrors. That'll do wonders to inspire folks around here. As reward for his skill and dedication to metalsmithing I've had his very own magma-forge built out of Brass for his exclusive personal use. Aardvark has his own for armor work and the third is used primarily by Pete when we've call for it. Oddbodd looked pleased. He'll make a good addition to the clan.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 19, 2009, 12:53:09 pm**

15th of Granite

The elves have arrived again.

They looked eager to see us when they arrived but I suspect that our increased numbers may have daunted them somewhat. The depot is central to the workings of our fortress and much traffic passes through the area. Pete continues to be paranoid about them and I am inclined to agree. In part because they simply make such poor trade partners.

On the bright side, it seems as if they've not managed to waylay any traders this year and only brought three logs, several bins of cloth and two packages of berries, wrapped in waxy leaves. We purchased all of it for a goodly portion of our stone crafts.

Two more thieves were caught in our traps and we're beginning to run out. In order to kill two birds, or three even, with one stone Ragnar and I have dug out a longish room behind the garbage dump for combat training. The cages with the captured creatures were all brought down past the elves. I'm not sure what was more disturbing, the sight of the prisoners who thought we might be selling them to the elves, or the sight of the elves realizing we were not bringing them the cages. Oddbodd is doing the work of connecting the cages while Pete hammers out some weapons, practice and otherwise for us.

Crush was the first to go. (19th of Slate) It took him a little time to get geared up, but Aardvark has finally finished the first suit of steel armor and was working on the next. Oddbodd had rigged the Tigermen cages to be opened. The elves' eyes followed the steel-clad figure as he passed them and into the doors where they knew the prisoners were held. Only keening wails were heard by them.

A slight rapping on the door indicated to Crush that the lever was about to be pulled. The cages sprung open and one of the Tigermen attempted to make her way past the armored dwarf. Crush hefted his copper training mace and charged. The thief dodged to one side as the dwarf crashed to the wall, slightly stunned. Then she was on him in a flash, and before Crush knew it he was being beaten about the helm with his own xCave Crocodile leather dressx, stolen from underneath his armor.

Standing he dissuaded the thief quickly by a quick one-two blow to the head, leaving the creature dazed on the ground. Further pummelling broke a hand and then crushed the ribcage against the stone floor.

Crush warily looked around in the dim room. He knew a second thief had been released but oddly enough the thief hadn't moved at all. Only two faintly luminous eyes were visible in the dark corner and the goblins, still in their cages, laughed harshly as Crush advanced on the creature. The tigerman almost didn't bother fighting back, only trying to grapple briefly with Crush before taking serious injuries and passing out due to pain, never again to wake.

His work done he grabbed his dress from the clutches of the dead thief and with what dignity remained him exited, splattered in blood and stalked past the elves to his room.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 19, 2009, 07:09:44 pm**

24th of Slate

Ragnar strapped the well-made steel gauntlet in place as she walked. There was confidence in her step, and a grin on her face as she straitened her clothes as well. Behind her Oddbodd seemed preoccupied as he carried a pile of mechanisms with him, intent on not dropping them but slightly red-faced, regardless.

She pulled out her axe, the gleaming copper one Pete had just forged, and the polished copper shield she strapped onto her other arm. She felt whole again, and confident as she hadn't felt for a long time since. Not since her second home had been destroyed. Not since ... but that was water under the bridge now. She smiled again to herself, hefting the axe experimentally in her grip as she nodded at the elves in passing, heading through the door. The room with the cages was dark, a single torch guttered dimly behind her as she sealed the door. Oddbodd's two knocks came loud and clear and with a *shink* the cages opened, loosing two of the goblin thieves.

Goblins. These were an enemy she was familiar with. She charged into the pair, taking them by surprise. They'd seen Crush fight and thought they might have some dim hope. They at least had their iron daggers where the other thieves had nothing. But Ragnar quickly removed all hope as her first charge closed the distance remarkably quickly and her first blow caught the goblin in the waist, cleaving it in two and dropping it to the floor. The other goblin gulped and lunged, but was deflected off her shield.

The goblin began to circle warily but Ragnar just laughed and cut it off, closing the distance in two swift strides. She felt no doubt here, no hesitation. She was born to battle and the goblin was not her match. She parried another blow with her axe and counterstruck, catching the goblin in the torso and lifting it bodily off it's feet. She pursued the flying creature swiftly and it barely had time to land when she struck it again sending it careening into the wall, broken and mangled.

It had been remarkably quick.

She unsealed the door and Oddbodd's pale face greeted her. He looked greatly relieved to see she was unharmed. The door behind him, too, was sealed for now and they shared a kiss in secret. They quickly separated again, almost awkwardly, and Oddbodd got back to work connecting the last two cages with Batmen to the lever.

Ragnar walked confidently out of the room, a happy smile playing across her broad face and extending up to her forehead with it's rusty hair.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 20, 2009, 12:51:48 pm**

2nd of Felsite

Fre grunted in annoyance at the elves in the depot staring at her as she entered the new training room. Oddbodd had interrupted her practice shooting to tell her that the next two cages were linked and ready for her to get some actual combat training. Then she was in the darkened room. It was filled with the haphazard remains from the previous battles, and some were beginning to get a little ripe. The two batmen hissed softly at her as she sealed the door. They were primitive, but still vaguely humanoid, lacking the intelligence for speech. Still, they were annoying creatures and had only been captured because they delighted in chasing after dwarves and gotten caught at the entrances.

The slight tapping at the door indicated that things were about to get ugly as she looked over her bone crossbow that Crush had made so long ago. It was sturdy and worked well enough, despite it's nature. Bone was a remarkable material, all in all.

As soon as the cages sprang open the beastmen let out a screech that filled the room, echoing out into the entry hall proper. But Fre calmly lifted her loaded crossbow to her shoulder and fired off a goblin bone bolt at the creature rearing in front of her. The bolt took it in

the shoulder as the pair advanced and it slowed, surprised. Fre reached down to fit another in and realized then that she'd forgotten to resupply. She only had four bolts left.

The second bolt went wide, unfortunately, but the third hit it in the leg. The fourth as well, sending it sprawling to the floor, in pain. She fitted the last bolt and fired it into the creature as it rose again, taking it in the chest and killing it outright as the other batman filled her vision, shrieking. Had it been a lesser dwarf they might have faltered then, but undaunted she gave a shout of her own and launched herself at the creature, bashing it with the bone weapon. It struck an arm, snapping the appendage and the batman lost all it's bluster. She struck again, and again, and again, until long after it had stopped twitching on the floor. She kicked the corpse once for good measure, then she calmly unlocked the door and left.

A half dozen dwarves looked on nervously as the door to the dump opened and their expression didn't fade as the blood and gore splattered Fre calmly walked over to the weapon bin and dropped the brain-encrusted weapon in before heading back to the kitchens. The elves looked somewhat paler, and one of the nearby dwarves turned to the other and whispered:

"And that's why you don't piss off the cook."

((Here's a pic of the entrance after the winter, rotting corpses and all. ;)))



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **February 20, 2009, 04:45:06 pm**

Diary of Crush, braindead menial

I kinda liked it when that tigerman thief took my dress away. Even though the species is tigermen she was a tigerwoman. The humans have a word for it, I think. I heard they call it 'kinky'.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 20, 2009, 05:12:27 pm**

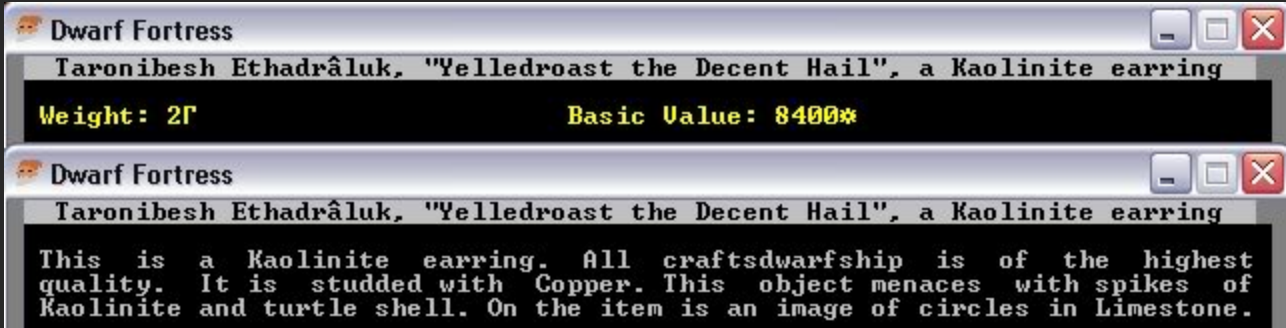
((Heh, I had to wonder Sonerohi if you happened to be a furry when that happened to you. I really only noticed when I saw the tigerman's corpse and noticed that it had an extra article of clothing. And that it was yours.))

10th of Felsite Late Spring

Work continues as normal on the dining hall and barracks. I believe we're nearing completion of the smoothing process. I believe I'm really getting a knack for this sort of stone work. It's almost as if I can manipulate the stone itself rather than having to chisel things out. In any case, we were all surprised today when Ustuth, our reclusive stonemason showed up in the hall holding aloft an earring of magnificent design.

She loudly proclaimed "I give you Taronibesh Ethardraluk, Yelledroast the decent Hail!".

Before quickly disappearing upstairs and immersing herself in a keg of dwarven rum. It's a very pretty earring, but I guess with all the work to do no one really noticed the stonecarver claiming her own workshop and gathering components. So we found out only after she was done. It's very well done, but I wonder what can be done with it.



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **February 20, 2009, 06:55:43 pm**

Quote from: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 20, 2009, 05:12:27 pm**

((Heh, I had to wonder Sonerohi if you happened to be a furry when that happened to you. I really only noticed when I saw the tigerman's corpse and noticed that it had an extra article of clothing. And that it was yours.))

No offence to any who are furry, but fuck no to that question. My dwarf is a pervert, and I'm crazy, but neither of us be anything beyond that.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 21, 2009, 02:06:26 pm**

Shouts were taken up by the woodworkers who were the first to see the tired and foot-sore migrants approaching from around the mountain range to the north.

Migrants!

Pete and I quickly made our way topside. He to see if news had been sent from his home and me with my vellum and quill to record details. I quickly made notes as they arrived.

1 family: Animal trainer (male), Peasant (wife), two kids
Animal dissector with two puppies (strange but welcome addition of stock)
A leatherworker, then a Gem setter with a young colt, a carpenter, another peasant, a jeweler with a puppy.

A ranger! Apparently it was he that led the group though the wilderness here and I've asked him to have Fre show him the archery range. I've also asked him not to hunt for the time being.

A bowyer, a miller, another peasant, a siege engineer (finally someone that can use the workshop we built in the entry hall. Perhaps I'll have it moved elsewhere.).

A tanner, a cheesemaker, a fourth peasant, another woodworker, a second bowyer and a metalsmith.

21 souls in all. That brings us up in population quite considerably.

Apparently this was one of a pair of ships that set sail. The other was lost in a storm and presumably blown off course. They may make for Shellhelms in any case.

Reports from the home country are not good. Quakes continue to shake the land and unknown creatures have been spotted issuing from fissures in the ground. The army has been hard put gathering the outlying villages and defending the main encampment. That many dwarves in one location apparently has drawn the wrath of many forces, and apparently undead have risen from the ocean itself to attack the camp.

I did notice a disturbing trend. It seems that many of the male dwarves were drafted into the military and so our gender imbalance is quickly becoming profound. It's no wonder Fre is annoyed at Aardvark. Of the now six (or seven) metalworkers, he and Oddbodd are the only males. To make things clearer, out of the fifty-two dwarves we now have here a full thirty four are female. That's nearly a two to one ratio. I hope that doesn't cause too many problems.

The newcomers should easily be able to find place in our housing section and though there is still a considerable amount of rubble there, at least they'll have beds and some furniture, as well as privacy.

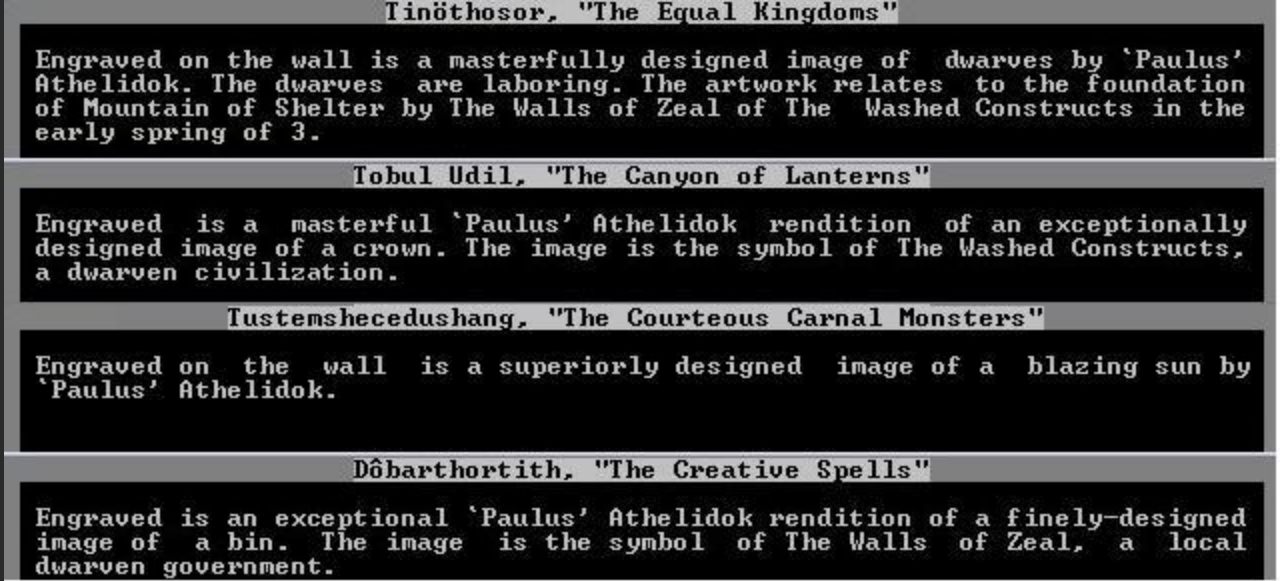
With the increase in population Pete, being officially in charge, announced that an election needed to be held to determine the mayoral position. It's possible that her being one of the first dwarves seen by the newcomers may have affected their choice, but she was voted in as first Mayor of Onol Lened. I've taken it upon myself to record the events of our first years upon our dining room walls, as well as our barracks walls to help those who may not know how to read or write learn their history.

I've included some rough rubbings of my favorites.

<p>Igrishol, "The Fell Muds"</p> <p>Engraved on the wall is a masterfully designed image of 'Paulus' Ringpoints the dwarf by 'Paulus' Athelidok. 'Paulus' Ringpoints is engraving. The artwork relates to the masterful engraving "The Wooden Butterfly" created by the dwarf 'Paulus' Ringpoints for The Walls of Zeal at Mountain of Shelter in the midspring of 5.</p>
<p>Sosh Kâtâk, "The Sandal of Scales"</p> <p>Engraved on the wall is a masterfully designed image of 'Fre' Noblepaddles the dwarf by 'Paulus' Athelidok. 'Fre' Noblepaddles is cooking. The artwork relates to the masterful biscuits prepared by the dwarf 'Fre' Noblepaddles for The Walls of Zeal at Mountain of Shelter in the early autumn of 4.</p>
<p>Angstukos, "The Red Razor"</p> <p>Engraved on the wall is a masterfully designed image of 'Pete' Swimfence the dwarf and dwarves by 'Paulus' Athelidok. 'Pete' Swimfence is surrounded by the dwarves. The artwork relates to the ascension of the dwarf 'Pete' Swimfence to leadership of The Walls of Zeal in the early spring of 3.</p>
<p>Anriz Rath, "The Sky of Temples"</p> <p>Engraved on the wall is an exceptionally designed image of Zolak Tickglade the goblin and 'Kolok' Pricelashes the dwarf by 'Paulus' Athelidok. 'Kolok' Pricelashes is striking down Zolak Tickglade. The artwork relates to the killing of the goblin Zolak Tickglade by the dwarf 'Kolok' Pricelashes in Mountain of Shelter in the midautumn of 4 during The Tenth Attempted Theft at Mountain of Shelter.</p>
<p>Shomad Gingim, "The Bottle of Distrust"</p> <p>Engraved on the wall is an exceptionally designed image of Yedéle Tickedunited the tigerman and 'Crush' Findgear the dwarf by 'Paulus' Athelidok. 'Crush' Findgear is striking down Yedéle Tickedunited. The artwork relates to the killing of the tigerman Yedéle Tickedunited by the dwarf 'Crush' Findgear in Mountain of Shelter in the midspring of 5 during The Twelfth Attempted Theft at Mountain of Shelter.</p>
<p>Arbostsarvesh, "The Deified Furnaces"</p> <p>Engraved on the wall is an exceptionally designed image of 'Oddbodd' Ropecloak the dwarf and The Systemic Twinkle the Copper armor stand by 'Paulus' Athelidok. 'Oddbodd' Ropecloak is raising The Systemic Twinkle. The artwork relates to the creation of The Systemic Twinkle in Mountain of Shelter by the dwarf 'Oddbodd' Ropecloak in the early winter of 4.</p>

((The first batch is civ stuff. Coming here in a bit. I thought it amusing that our symbol was one of order and organization. A bin. Nothing more organizing than that in DF. Heh.

The second is more about us. Sorry for those not yet mentioned. I looked through all of them and didn't find any with Ragnar, strangely enough. Nor with Der Kartoffel, who provides food aplenty but doesn't do too much as a farmer that's particularly noteworthy. I'll try to include you a bit more.))



((Here's the others))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **February 22, 2009, 05:19:07 am**

Those are very lucky male dwarves.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **February 22, 2009, 11:21:07 am**

That's a really good ratio.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 23, 2009, 02:27:33 pm**

23rd of Felsite

There was a certain amount of tension in the air as each of the four gripped their tools of choice. Pete had insisted that with her newfound position it was imperative that the fortress have an internal water source. Crush crouched in the darkness just west of Fre, mace held loosely in his grip. Fre held center position in the rear with a clear view of the small cave that had been carved out. A damp smell filled the air, and with it just a hint of another smell. One not unfamiliar to the four of them. The scent of death. The remains of the first exploration still littered the floor, picked clean of flesh by the remaining troglobites of the river. Ragnar crouched in the shadows just east of Fre, gripping her new copper axe firmly and bracing her feet against the uneven stone floor and mentally noting the location of rubble. Paulus stood nearest the exit door, having just sealed it behind them.

They were unsure how many creatures remained, and didn't want to risk any being able to slip past them into the fortress to wreak havoc. Judging the others to be ready he peeked his head into the darkness to gaze at the cold, clear waters flowing swiftly from their source, a light mist spraying his face and soaking into his clothing as he did so. He could just barely make out several creatures in the water yet, but they seemed not to make any advance. He steeled himself and began digging out another section of stone, widening the hole and with a resounding splash the whole section fell, knocking loose several chunks of rock into the river and significantly widening the hole.

A sudden silence filled the cavern and then a mass of bodies poured from the river, filled with wrath and hunger.

Crush was the first to pick a frogman from the crowd, striking it a solid blow and knocking the soft creature to the ground. Fre began firing into the thick knot of bodies with significant effect, slowing and injuring many of them as Ragnar too sprang into action. A snakeman reared up in front of her, fangs bared and attempted to strike but the bite was repelled by the solid steel of her armor. She clove into the creature, severing a leg and laying it out upon the ground.

There were many of them, and the four soon found themselves outnumbered and fighting defensively, but gaining ground steadily. Crush downed the remaining two frogmen, easily pulping the soft creatures before moving to intercept a snakeman. Fre continued to pour bolts into the slippery mass of creatures sinking several into a rubbery olmman that was the last to emerge, and due to her success quickly became a target for two snakemen who flanked her, looking for an opening. Another bolt took one in the chest, piercing a lung and it fell to the ground in pain, but the second struck rapidly and latched it's head onto her arm, biting viciously and she felt herself loosing control of her limbs.

Terror filled her as her muscles locked due to the venom and she could only just manage to prevent herself from falling face-first, slumping to the ground. As the snakeman loomed over her inert, but completely aware, form she saw a shadow rise up behind the creature, and a glint of copper as Ragnar charged into the creature bowling it over from behind. It stood again slowly, and warily and met only Ragnar's axe, coming in to strike it in the torso. So mighty was the blow that the creature was launched toward the opening in the wall, striking the olmman still standing dazed in that location and knocking it backwards into the water. The snakeman continued it's graceful arc into the far wall, hitting with a wet thud and several cracks before slumping dead into the water.

With that blow the tide had turned, and many of the creatures were now wounded. Those few that were hale could not manage to penetrate the steel of the dwarves as Paulus stood watch over Fre's form while Crush and Ragnar dealt with the living and wounded remaining creatures. It wasn't long until stillness returned, and only the labored breathing of dwarves broke the silence and sound of falling and rushing water.

Their first concern was for Fre, still lying paralyzed on the ground, but thankfully the venom wore off before too long and though she moved stiffly at first she was up and walking before too long. A call from Crush brought her over to the edge of the river moving swiftly into blackness to the west. A single olmman lay almost still in the water, and but for the occasional spasm of pain was almost undetectable. She brought her crossbow to bear and three quick bolts quickly sent a wave of red cascading down the river into the dark.

((Water source is now ours. Crush's kills: Two frogmen, Three snakemen. Ragnar's kills:One olmman, two snakemen. Fre's kills: One frogman, one olmman, many assists. Paulus' kills: One rock wall. ;)))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 23, 2009, 06:05:46 pm**

11th of Hematite Early Summer

A variety of things has kept us busy lately. Ragnar and I were working on clearing the area around the waterfall. We now have a rather nice area that may be used for fishing and potentially, relaxation. I'd like to see a proper well established a little closer to the main working areas of the fortress but that may take a little while. Pete has decided to utilize her position to improve our fortress wealth and mandated the construction of a billion item. Of course, as soon as the bar itself was produced she realized that was good enough since she is our only metalcrafter.

The bedrooms are also now fully finished as well as fully furnished. Though we are in the process of remove the vast amount of loose

stone and getting them smoothed. Ragnar continues to work on that as I begin laying out plans for the waterways and well system.

One of the woodcutters under Kolok's direction, Bomrek, saved a peasant from a batman attack recently. They've become quite the annoyance.

Now that I've had time to meet with the migrants personally I recognize several faces from Dorenemal. Perhaps a half dozen in this group, though only one that I knew personally. Tholtig, the once-hunter turned bonecarver at Dorenemal had arrived with the group. I hadn't recognized him when he walked it, he was such a gaunt figure of his former self. And I had been caked in dirt from the mines so he hadn't recognized me.

But we were able to sit in the dining hall and put back a few mugs while he told me how things were going back home.

Apparently, things were not going all that well. I remembered that him and Led, our other crazy hunter, whom I had spent several months with while we were both recovering from the effects of dwarven justice. He too had taken up bone-carving and had quickly become legendary after producing the turtle-shell mini-forge that had inspired so many at Dorenemal. The pair had set out to form a new religious group after I had left to go to Kilrudmorul. Initially it had been viewed with considerable suspicion, but after the massive loss of life and home people had been searching for something more to believe in and it had quickly gained followers.

The Queen herself had initially opposed it, and vehemently so, but after her ... demise, it had been viewed at least tolerantly, by Tosid, the new King. Religion was an acceptable dwarven pursuit and though the deities worshipped often varied, few were considered worthy of repression, at least for him. The nobles that had followed the previous Queen had felt differently, and taken up her view and that of Agna. That the newly created religion amounted to little more than defeatism and that it was to be discouraged. Violently if need be.

After several high-profile failed mandates and subsequent beatings/incarcerations of their followers, in which three had died, one had gone mad due to dehydration and starvation and a fourth had been rendered a near-braindead vegetable, passing out every minute or two they decided it was long past time to move to the new world. Tholtig and a pair of others had gone on one ship, Led and the majority of the flock on the other.

Tholtig was the only one remaining. The other two had been committed to their god en-route. One of swamp fever, the other had wandered off into the swamp chasing some sort of will-o-the-wisp. They hadn't dared to go after him and lose the path.

I commiserated him for his loss, but he seemed not at all perturbed by it, simply saying that Mondul's will.

I remember Led well enough to know that he was highly charismatic, and possessed of a great energy and could imagine him leading sermons in temple's much like Avuz's. But I decided to forbear from asking more questions as we had taken too much time already and I had work to do. I assured him he would have plenty of work here to do and told him he could take over as bonecarver. The jeweler would surely be glad to be able to get back to his own work.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **February 23, 2009, 10:48:36 pm**

Sweet! I Crushed™ those river critters! Go Team Paulus! *respect knucks everyone*.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 24, 2009, 12:46:03 pm**

12th of Hematite

The human traders have arrived from Thuromon again, their wide smiles and white teeth showing bright. They always seem pleased to come here and trade with us, as though they enjoyed being out of the sun. The fact that the roof is only a foot from their heads seems to bother a few of them, but they're incredibly tall and we only cut the ceilings as high as a dwarf with a pick can reach.

They've brought much food and drink, for which we are grateful. Fre had just ran out of things to properly cook. Tarantula roasts all around! I thing they're beginning to grow on me. They've also brought a large number of empty barrels, much of it having been used for drink and clean water as they travelled, no doubt.

But best of all was that they brought both copious amounts of wood and several Celestrium bars. Our small stockpile is steadily growing.

In exchange they were happy to trade for many of our stone crafts, and the goblin clothing and other items that we've been sprucing up with sewn images of Cryptmirror and other spectacular images. Many of our stone crafts they were particularly impressed with as several had been decorated with gemstones. The bauxite rings inset with white chalcedony were particularly popular. We also brought out several of the nicer shields that Aardvark had made, engraven on the front with images of the sun, or waves, or trees and other things. They seemed very excited about those as their usual hide-bound shields were clearly inferior.

Pete was happy talking to their liason and would even occasionally lapse into the human's native language, a rapid chittering sounding speech full of clicks and other strange sounds rather than completely words.

Still, good trade and though the dark-skinned humans seem military in culture they're skilled traders and quite personable. Unfortunately such interactions tend to remind me of past friends, particularly Abba, who I hope is safe and well.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 24, 2009, 06:55:25 pm**

18th of Hematite

I'm not quite sure how happy I am about the situation but it seems that once the migrants realized that Pete was originally a native and not a dwarf of the Big Knife tribe they insisted on having another vote.

Crush was elected mayor by popular consensus.

I find such prejudice ... distasteful. Not to mention very outside the character that I would like to have in the clan. Strangely enough, Pete didn't seem too disappointed and firmly pledged to support Crush. I must say that initially this surprised me, and raised Pete considerably in my estimation. Until I discovered the pair of them holding hands in the unfinished cavern near the waterfall. Apparently this has been going on for some time without my being aware. Only once have I caught Pete calling Crush by her 'pet' name for him.

'Crushy-poo'

It makes me shudder just thinking about it. There's something decidedly undwarven about such afectations.

I must admit, however, that the pair make a good team. Even when Pete was Mayor, Crush supported her and did what he could to help. Now that it's the other way around Pete is happily doing the same. Of course, I suspect that the mandate for Nickel items, one of Crush's favorite metals was, perhaps, inspired by Pete's mandate for Billion items.

In any case, we've known about an exposed vein of garnierite near the edge of the giant crevasse and we'll set about extracting some of it for Crush. It seems as well that we passed narrowly by a kaolinite deposit while searching for the waterfall and Pete feels it's time to explore it more thoroughly. Rumor has it that the area is known for it's diamonds and that they tend to be in just such deposits.

It gives me something to do while Ragnar continues to work on her engraving. They're converting the mined out malachite vein into a sort of historical area. It'll be smoothed and the walls engraved. The residual deposits on the floor lend it a very pleasing effect.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **February 25, 2009, 12:01:16 am**

Yaaaaay!!! [Crush mandates the production of happiness 8/8].

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 25, 2009, 12:46:03 pm**

25th of Hematite

There has been pretty good news all around recently. I've begun excavating the kaolinite deposit and in the process discovered a large deposit of almandine gems, two deposits of light yellow diamonds and two deposits of celestrium. A veritable horde of wealth sitting in a single vein of kaolinite.

Crush was so impressed that he's requested that we continue all such excavations of kaolinite deposits should we come across them in our mining. He's also suggested to me that some improvements were in order to raise morale and happiness among our clan. I'm in agreement and have begun drawing up plans for a well/statuary area that should do the trick. It may take some time to get things working properly, but should be well worth the effort.

In addition, Datan, our legendary weaver, had several run-in's with batmen recently while he was out collecting webs to weave into thread. He beat three of them into a pulp with his bare hands when they tried to attack him. I'm inclined to reward him for his initiative. Two others also had encounters with batmen and dispatched them, though I think they were both woodcutters and had axes. In addition, we've punched through the side of the hill into the level of the nickel ore vein and have begun construction of a walkway, allowing us to reach it. There is a considerable amount of disturbances possible with creatures roaming the area so I've asked our hunter to take up a watch post there for the time being.

Last time he came back for a drink he'd already shot down a batman and a giant bat. The skies are beginning to look a little friendlier now.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **February 25, 2009, 04:52:03 pm**

The observations of Oddbodd.
Ahah! We have found kaolinite! what wealth resides in it!
Why, we will be able to produce so many china tea sets! If only I can get the others to listen to me about the wonders of tea. They seem to be confused by the lack of alcohol.

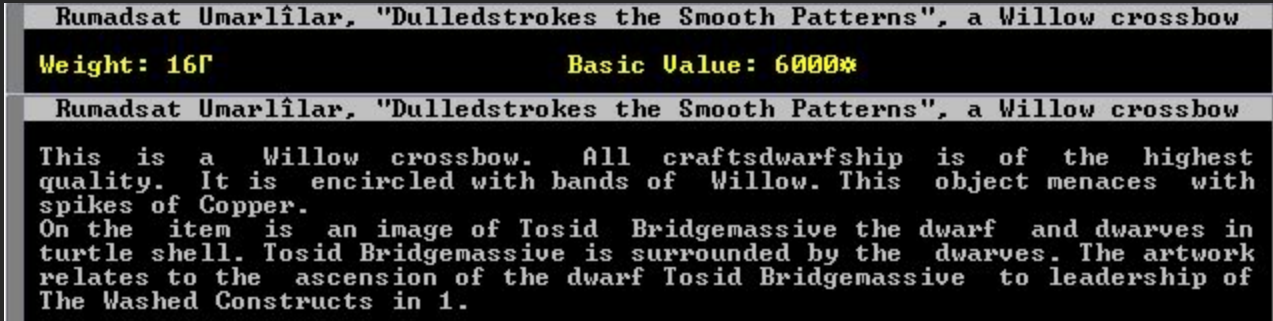
Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 25, 2009, 05:39:09 pm**

3rd of Galena

One of our recent additions, the bowyer Asmel, was apparently possessed while engaging in drink. We're not sure if it was the spirits themselves or if some other form of spirit is at work, but until we had a bowyer workshop made next to the siegehall nothing was done but shouting, and lots of it.

Several reasonably cheap materials were claimed and the result was vastly more impressive than the material involved. Fre I suspect, may wish to spend more time in the practice ranges. It too shall go in the barracks as an inspiration for our marksdwarves. Both of them. One of them being Fre.

Of particular interest to me was the carving of the ascension of King Tosid to the throne. A nice piece that, and I now begin to suspect that further preparations for the future shall have to be made.



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 25, 2009, 07:25:31 pm**

28th of Galena

We've had our first natural birth here in Onol Lened. Olin, the engraver that has been working with Ragnar and myself gave birth to a girl. She was quite proud of her new daughter and I wouldn't be half surprised if an engraving of the child shows up somewhere. I for one would find it amusing.

In addition I've been working on the water channel for the newly designed well room. It is turning out to be a good location for it as I've run across a small deposit of Platinum in the olivine just below and to the east of the waterfall itself. Further excavations along the channel unearthed clusters of moss agate and white chalcedony. The well room itself is near the magnetite deposit we haven't bothered to excavate entirely. (Our stores are still full of it despite running the forges non-stop.) Near the center of the room we discovered the beginnings of a kaolinite vein that we've begun unearthing as well and have already discovered another small cluster of Celestrium and a pocket of light yellow diamonds.

Some of the recent migrants are referring to the areas beneath the fort proper as the diamond mines of Onol Lened. Ironically, Dorenemal would be a much more appropriate name for this place than it was at our prior home. I've included a rough sketch of the dining hall and unfinished (cluttered) barracks below.



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 26, 2009, 01:27:12 pm**

16th of Limestone

Our liason and caravan arrived today from Shellhelms. The liason went to meet with Crush while I waited at the depot for the traders. I had already ordered a variety of goods brought to the depot for trade and bins were in the process of being dropped off when the lead wagon with the head merchant arrived. He looked relieved to be inside and out of the sun when all of a sudden his demeanor changed and his face darkened.

Turning to me he spat on the ground.

"Nay, we'll not trade with ye while ye keep vermin like THAT around." He guestured towards, to my surprise, Tholtig, who was carrying a bin of crafts into the depot at that moment.

Turning to the others in the caravan he shook his head.

"Turn back, lads. We'll not stop here this year."

And with that the caravan simply turned around and left.

I stood there in amazement, and Tholtig came up beside me.

"I'm sorry Paulus. Truly I am. Had I known that my presence here would cause such a disturbance I'd have gone elsewhere. Kogan be damned though, he is stubborn dwarf."

His speech shook me out of my reverie. "Kogan?"

"Aye, the head 'merchant' there if you will. He was a farmer back at Dorenemal if you'll recall. Fell into favor with the Queen and her lot of nobles, though from what I hear it cost him his pet."

"What's that got to do with you and not wanting to trade."

""s a good question indeed. I knew he had a grudge against Led and myself, on account of us defying the Queens orders and establishing the worship of Mondul. I fear, now, that things haven't fared well for Led and the others though."

"And he'd not trade with us, simply because you're here?"

"Aye, he might at that. Particularly so if the nobles have stepped up their persecution of us and ours. It'd be viewed as a loyalist sentiment and likely to curry favor with the nobility."

"That's absolute rot."

"Indeed, but little enough can be done about it. I can pack my things and go if you'd like. Too late this year, but perhaps next year they'd be back."

"No, you're kin as much as the rest of us. I'll not see you tossed out on account of your beliefs."

He nodded and went to go return the bin he'd carried down.

And in my heart I cursed the stupidity of dwarves.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 26, 2009, 06:24:32 pm**

28th of Sandstone

We've received yet another group of migrants. This group strangely enough claims to be from Shellhelms itself rather than from the fatherland. Apparently with the exodus the city has become rather crowded. With Nobles as well as dwarves. I shudder to think what that would be like, particularly with poor accomodations.

There were even two families, as well as a few old clannies that simply got on the wrong ship. A thresher and his wife (peasant). An Animal trainer and her husband and daughter. (also peasant) A peasant, Fisher, planter and armorer (now furnace operator) came as well. They were apparently accompanied by an axedwarf with the name of Bomrek. She claims to have been in Scott's Suicidal Squad as it's been jokingly referred to. At least for a time. She transferred out, and became a freelancer after her tour of duty was up, and when she heard the group was headed down she offered to provide escort.

Oh, and for the record, six females, four males. Better than 2:1 odds I suppose. Our lodgings are beginning to be full and I fear we'll have to dig some new quarters out soon, but first things first. Drainage for the well. Storage for military gear off the barracks. Installation of

siege weapons down the hall. Rooms for the future. We've got a lot to keep us busy this fall and winter.

And for some strange reason Crush has mandated the production of two items made of Pegasus bone. I'm afraid we'll have to disappoint him, there isn't any left. Maybe I'll see if Fre is available to do some hunting.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 27, 2009, 01:03:14 pm**

19th of Moonstone

We've had our first dangerous encounter today. I suppose we have been overdue. Nearly three years without any serious altercation more than rampant thieving. Or at least rampant attempts at thieving.

One of our military in training ran afoul of a goblin thief while hauling in a log. He immeadiately pounced on it but was unable to subdue it. Both took injuries, the recruit's were more serious and he was forced to break off the attempt and let the thief flee. Our marksdwarf, Zasit was above ground on patrol at the time and responded but with insufficient time to catch the thief. The recruit is currently bedridden while he recovers.

More seriously, Datan, our weaver stumbled across a goblin raiding party. A group of five, with three crossbow goblins, a wrestler and led by a swordsgoblin. He took off sprinting as soon as he came across them and managed to outdistance the ranged enemies before getting injured. The swordsgoblin in hot pursuit. The other lagged behind somewhat and Zasit, who was still out patrolling came to help, while Kolok suited up. He managed to get off a half dozen shots, injuring the wrestler that advanced on him before taking a bolt in the chest, and another in the leg. He went down and the goblins continued firing at him for some time. We suspect he died shortly thereafter.

Kolok came upon the four goblins from behind, as they had their backs to our entrance and charged the nearest crossbow goblin, taking it's leg of in the first swipe. The wrestler engaged him but fared no better, losing both arms, one at the shoulder and the other at the elbow to the enraged woodcutter. The goblins gave back as well though and a bolt took Kolok in the stomach, and in the wrist, but he shrugged off the damage as soon as the small wave of nausea passed and finished off the two in front of him.

Whirling on the remaining two he charged again, doing his best to dodge bolts flying thickly through the air. His first swing decapitated the closest goblin and the other decided to cut his losses and fled swiftly to the north. The leader had already departed when he saw his squad cut apart.

For his valor in combat Kolok has been titled Kolok Teshkadmeng Orshetmes or, Kolok the Cremated Creature of Confidence. Talk about alliteration.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 27, 2009, 07:19:45 pm**

((HFS Surprise, no it's not what you think... yet.))

Spoiler (click to show/hide)
21st of Obsidian

Paulus ran his hand across his forehead, removing a few beads of sweat that were threatening to start moving down into his eyes. The action left a smear of dirt from one side of his head to the other.

The well itself had been dug out beneath the large room that was being cleared of rubble. It had been a relatively simple matter of mining out each floor and then channelling around the outside but for a single square. He'd then collapsed the uppermost layer onto the rest, clearing the entire shaft in a massive cloud of dust and stone. Apparently two dwarves standing directly above the shaft had been knocked to the floor and momentarily stunned by the deliberate excavation.

It left significant piles of rubble at the bottom that he wanted removed as well, but he began the drainage shaft regardless. Ragnar and he had been taking it in turns, digging through the hard granite of the lower crusts. Before him the wall crumbled, revealing a glint of a metal vein in the dim light of the mine. Galena. Well, they wouldn't want for silver here.

Swinging again he continued deeper, moving inexorably towards the chasm where he would allow the water to drain into the formless depths below. He estimated some distance remained when to his surprise his pick caught and penetrated into a pocket of air. The stone crumbled before him and to his horror he saw a ghoulish room, lit by fires, the smell of sulfur washing back at him through the hole. A single figure ran at him and in the dim light he could make out the general appearance of an avar, male. The creatures lips were cracked and bleeding, and spittle formed around his mouth, flecking his clothing, which hung on his frame in tatters. The madness in his eyes gave him a despairing look as the dwarf stumbled back into the safety of the tunnel.

It was only moments before he regained his wits and began filling the shaft with rubble and stone, blocking passage entirely. Soon the area had been sealed off, but the madness within only seemed to have passed without into the dwarf. In the flicker of a single lamp he stood, cracking his back. Gripping his pick he turned, swiftly and exited the mines, heading quickly to the smithies.

There he found Aardvark, Oddbodd, and Pete, along with others. His actions seemed abrupt, as if he'd come to a sudden decision and he began barking out orders.

"Aardvark, I want you to get working on suits of High steel plate, as many as we have metal for."

Unperturbed the armorer merely nodded and went upstairs to begin his true work. Well over a hundred bars of the hardened steel lay in neat rows in the bins upstairs and he grabbed three, hauling them below to forge out his first suit of high steel plate.

"Pete, Oddbodd, I want the celestrium smelted into Anurite, and the remainder to be made into Celestial steel. At once." Oddbodd nodded, but Pete gave him a curious look.

"We've only got enough for about four bars of Anurite. And maybe half a dozen of Celestial Steel. Are you sure you want to do this now?"

Paulus turned towards her in silence and nodded.

Loudly he said. "Yes, it's time." and more softly, almost to himself, "It's time we take the war to them."

And again addressing Pete, "When you're done Pete, I want you to make a battle axe out of Anurite, and another out of Celestial steel, as well as a mace. The rest of the Anurite have Aardvark forge into shields. The rest of the steel I want you to make bolts with. I'll be upstairs with the others, training."

He turned and swiftly stalked off. It was long past time to get into military shape again, and the recruits were nearly ready as well. Time to form their new military. He only hoped that they would have enough time to get ready.

((Broke into a Peculiar chamber and sealed it immeadiately. Adamantine discovered. I must be mistaken in my belief that the secret chambers were protected by a wall of adamantine. I thought I'd fine some of that and not break through in a place where there wasn't any. It's a very large room, seven stories high in all. I'll not provide too many details until later, and will do it all in story.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonero** on **February 28, 2009, 12:24:14 pm**

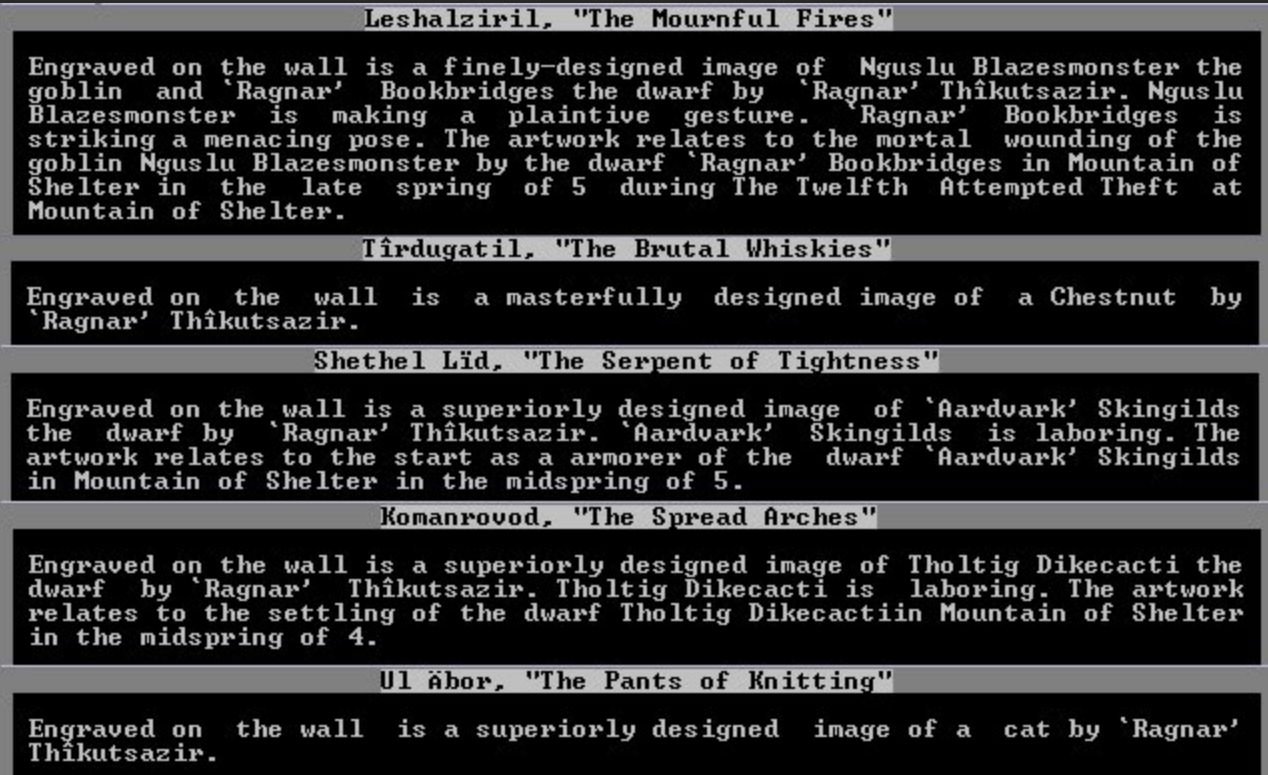
It's clobberin time!

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **February 28, 2009, 12:57:34 pm**

Oh, if only we had that repeating *cat bone cannonball* gun.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 28, 2009, 09:21:29 pm**

((A few more amusing engravings for your viewing pleasure this weekend.))



((I'll give you three guesses for what we do with Chestnuts and cats here...))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **February 28, 2009, 11:31:25 pm**

The mournful fires would've been better for the chestnut engraving.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 02, 2009, 01:30:54 pm**

Spoiler (click to show/hide)
15th of Granite

Ragnar knocked lightly on Paulus' door before entering. She was almost surprised to find him at his desk rather than elsewhere, and almost hesitated.

"Come in Ragnar. I've been meaning to talk to you."

"Good. I've got a piece ta say to ye as well."

He nodded, almost wearily.

"Very well, but me first, or I'll forget entirely. We're stopping progress on the drainage shaft for the well system for now. I don't want anyone going down there."

"Ah thought you'd be sayin' something like that."

That caught him by surprise and he turned to look at her with one eyebrow raised.

"Don't be daft, lad. The rest of us are neither stupid nor blind. We see what's going on."

"Oh, then tell me, Ragnar, what's going on."

"Seems ta us that you're in over your head."

"US?"

"Aye. Look, we ken ye well enough by now ta know that when you do things it means somethin. Ye came here, 'inspired' by a vision and none of us doubted ye. At least none as knew ye. Despite this being in the middle of a vast stretch o' nothin' and far from our home. We dinna doubt you've some terrible purpose for it.

Ye've dug in rather than expand topside, which is not like you, you're rushing projects, getting things mapped out but not finished. Like you're both looking for something but not finding it and like you intend to not be here to finish it yourself. So you leave your imprint and plans but let others finish it. That too is not like ye. It bespeaks haste.

Third, and most recently, you've abandoned a project which would be a simple matter to finish for the likes of us, and instead have focused on martial defense, spending hours sparring in the barracks rather than working. All well and good, but again, not like ye."

Paulus growled slightly. "Get ta the point then."

"My point is this. We, your friends, know yer up ta somethin'. Somethin' that has you worried. We want in."

He was silent for a long time as Ragnar stared defiantly at him.

"Are ye sure ye want ta know then? You're committed to helping and not hindering?"

"Aye. Me and the others'll do what we can ta help."

"Which others?"

Ragnar gave an exasperated sigh. "You know, me, Fre, Aardvark, Kolok even Crush, Pete and Oddbodd have noticed the change in ye and want to know what's going on."

"Very well, I suppose you do deserve ta know. Call them together here. We'll meet in half an hour, and keep it quiet. I don't want the general populace ta know what's going on."

Half an hour later they were gathered in silence in Paulus' room. He was pacing near his table as they came and stood, there being seating for only one, and that was not being used. They stood expectantly as he searched for the words. Finally he spoke.

"I suppose you all deserve the truth. But I must have your promise that you'll not hinder what it is I have to do. Ye don't have to agree with me, nor go along, but you do have to promise not to go against it. Do I have your agreement?"

There seemed to be some trepidation, mostly on the part of Crush, Pete and Oddbodd, who were relative newcomers, but all agreed and he soon continued.

"Very well then. I'll tell you this. We are at war."

There was some consternation among them. No other civilization had yet openly proclaimed a war, they were all too busy rebuilding the shattered remains of their homes and people.

"I know, but this I'll tell ye too. It was we who began this latest period of strife. When we went to Dorenemal we plunged our nation into war with the goblins, and though it was not our deliberate choice to do so, it happened nonetheless. And we were winning that war, if there is truly such a thing as winning a war. The goblins were desparate and they long sought for a way to gain advantage against us. In doing so they awoke, nay unleashed, a great evil that had been fettered for nigh over a thousand years.

It was this ... thing, this god of chaos, that caused the world to break, unleashing the undying fight between order and chaos again. So, in a way, we too are responsible for the sundering of the world."

Pete had gone somewhat pale but Paulus continued.

"Our gods participate in this fight, and have sent me, sorry, us, here to strike a blow against our common enemies. Here in this very spot, long ago, the war was fought, and the scales were tilted in favor of chaos when one of their lieutenants struck a mighty blow against an orderly god, direly wounding him. This lieutenant, and many of his forces, were counter-attacked and imprisoned. Imprisoned in the very stone beneath our feet.

How was this accomplished? A vast meteor of molten starmetal, of adamantine, had been prepared and struck them as they fought. The lieutenants power was sufficient to ensure his survival, and apparently that of others around him, but they were encased far beneath the earth.

We have struck that very adamantine, and broken through into the chamber where those who were imprisoned have been kept alive by fell magic."

He paused to let that sentance sink in. Several eyes lit up at the mention of adamantine, but no one spoke.

"I came across that chamber nearly two weeks ago, digging the drainage shaft, and sealed it up again as fast as I could. Nothing came out, nor did I see any enemies, per se. But this much I also know, we cannot use the adamantine against them. It is within the chamber and we cannot get at it, except through it.

For this reason I've asked you, Aardvark, and you Pete and Oddbodd to work the celestrium into alloys. We will need great weapons and armor if we are to defeat the enemy that dwells within these walls. And we'll need to train again. It has been too long since we've been honed for combat and I fear we've become somewhat sloppy in our military ways.

So, let me say this. We prepare for war now. Not against some mortal enemy, nor against our hated foes, the goblins. But against something far more terrible. We prepare to fight a demon, a lord of the pit. I have reason to believe that his power has been weakened by time and the effort it takes to maintain life trapped in stone, but he will be an adversary beyond our wildest imaginings. A being who helped creat the collossi used in wars of ages past, a being who forged great demonic weapons powerful enough to wound gods. That is who we prepare to fight.

Of Aardvark, Pete and Oddbodd, I would ask rather that you prepare the means for us to do so, rather than to join me below, but the rest of you are welcome, should you wish it.

So now, now that you know the truth and the path I have committed myself to. Who will join me?"

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **March 02, 2009, 02:01:11 pm**

Ye need my mace

(bonus points to whoever continues in LoTR fashion, fellowship crafting scene).

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **March 02, 2009, 04:45:42 pm**

You'll always have my crossbow, Paulus. Consider your back safe.

(And you better bet Fre considers Aardvark as a serpent of tightness, the unfaithful snake, lying around with those tight-bearded, no good, love-stealing...)

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **March 02, 2009, 04:53:49 pm**

You can bet that Oddbodd is truly bricking it now.

An eccentric mechanic/metalcrafter who lives on crumpets is not perhaps the most obvious demonslayer.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 02, 2009, 05:44:10 pm**

17th of Granite

The sound of metal hitting metal echoed through the halls as Inod, the pump operator made her way up to the barracks. She looked on in jealousy as the dwarves sparred, putting nicks and dings in the newly crafted high steel armor that had been churning from the forges. There wasn't enough yet to fully armor all the dwarves in training for the military, and she was getting tired of training, day in and day out, without even getting to use armor or weapons.

The sight of others practicing only increased her frustration, but she knew she could wait. They had the material, she'd been hauling magnetite ore up to the supply room only hours before, during a much needed break. Shaking her head she called out to the pair sparring.

"Oi, Paulus, Crush!"

She repeated it again louder as the pair separated, mace and sword lowering as they faced her and removed helms. Paulus approached, grim and sweat streaked.

"What?"

"Traders. The elves have arrived and are in the depot below wantin' ta trade."

"Bah, I can't be bothered by them now. The only useful thing they seem to bring is wood and bins. You take care of it. Just have some bins of crafts brought down and exchange what they have for as little as you can manage to give them."

"Me?" She seemed taken aback.

Paulus hardly heard and had already replaced his helmet, sword now out and darting back and forth as Crush replaced his own headpiece.

"Just get it done. See that they don't get any funny ideas either."

She turned and headed back down to the main hall. As always it was a massive bustle of activity, dwarves coming to and fro. A squad of five marksmen in training she called over and stationed between the depot and the exit, just in case and had bins hauled down. She never imagined that life would change so much since she had arrived. Here she was, a daughter of farmers, a thresher herself, trading with elves and being trained for the military by the likes of Ragnar, armored by Aardvark and sparring, perhaps, at some future time with Paulus.

Life at her old home of Sazirkeb had been relaxed. Routine had long since been established and everything was settled. Farmers only had to do their own jobs, and could relax when their labors were not otherwise needed. Here was different, and though the fortress was only three years old, already it was obtaining that sprawling nature and bustle of much older places. Only the frenetic pace set by their labor manager was vastly different.

No one had time to rest.

((Heh, thanks for the comments all. The LoTR scene would work well enough I suppose, except we're all dwarves. So "you've got my bow, and my crossbow and my axe and my axe, and my axe and my axe" isn't quite the same. lol.

Still, it should be interesting. I'd like us to get enough training to be able to use the artifact weapons and stuff, which may take a little while. Legendary isn't required but it does take a bit. Fre is probably the closest, then Ragnar and myself who started with some martial skills. Kolok, I'm afraid you're stuck at a lower training level due to injury but I'll do what I can to compensate. As it is, I've no idea what modifications Mayday has put into the pits, so I'm taking this carefully.

Metalworkers are getting overtime like crazy. The smelters are busy non-stop since it takes so much to make High steel. (Magnetite>Ironx2, Iron>Pig Iron, Wood>Charcoal x2, Pig Iron/Iron> Steel, Steel> High Steel) It's quite the lengthy process and I've got five magma smelters running full steam. We had over 100 bars waiting to be turned into armor and so Aardvark is now busy as well, and Pete's working on the alloys, with Oddbodd helping prepare defenses below, that and smelting.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 03, 2009, 12:52:36 pm**

2nd of Slate

The metalworks ate ore and belched flame, and with it came a noise common to most dwarven abodes, the sound of hammer hitting anvil, the ring of metal being shaped. It was a sweet music to Aardvark, and more so because they were able to work his favorite metal of all.

Steel.

The workers next to him hummed as they worked, but little of it was audible to any but the dwarf making the sound, the din of the smithies overpowered all but shouted conversation. Aardvark fell into a sort of reverie and saw in his mind's eye a great construction. A magnificent creation of steel. He saw himself from outside himself, as if watching from above and over the shoulder as he beat the high steel into the proper shape, working it carefully and meticulously until it was just right. Then the reheating, and pounding and shaping, and reheating and pounding and shaping, until it had been done dozens of times, strengthening the metal into it's perfect ideal.

And then all at once it was as if he awoke from his dream, to find himself at his forge. Before him lay the creation he had dreamed of, a perfect High Steel shield and he knew in it's mind what it was to be called. Sezuklâluth, or Slapflooded. The gift of Logem Earthencolors to their cause. A mighty bulwark against evil. With trembling hands he raised it above his head and gazed at it's perfection in the dim light of the forges. A hush fell over the others as they too came to see this newest creation.

The shield itself was oblong, almost oval in shape, but the steel spikes that protruded from it on the front edges would help provide cover and catch weapons without hindering visibility. On the front of the shield was a pattern of Limestone spikes, the stone worked into the metal so that the spikes were literally crafted into the bulk of the shield itself. A single band of glass encircled the edge of the shield, lending it beauty and in the glass the symbol of Logem.

Sezuklâluth, "Slapflooded", a High steel shield	
Weight: 392lb	Basic Value: 176400*
Sezuklâluth, "Slapflooded", a High steel shield	
This is a High steel shield. All craftsddwarfship is of the highest quality. It is studded with High steel and encircled with bands of clear glass. This object menaces with spikes of High steel and Limestone.	

((Very fortuitous. I'd have been happier with a non-possession mood of course, as I'd love for you to be a legendary armorer but ah well. Tried to get you to make it out of a different metal as well, but high steel it had to be. Easily our most valuable artifact so far, though. And very useful too.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 03, 2009, 03:46:57 pm**

18th of Slate

I've been forced to take time out of the training schedule to welcome a group of migrants with Crush. We didn't bother changing out of our armor, and I suspect it may have been a mistake. Wearing a vast amount of steel in the scorching sun may keep you safe from errant enemies, but it's also a heck of a way to cook yourself alive. I began feeling a bit nauseous shortly after heading up. Still, perhaps I've just been underground too long.

The mines will do that to you. I must resolve to get more sun, whatever the cost.

In any case, I was able to welcome our newest additions, as well as my brother's wife's uncle's (King Tosid that is) cousin. It means were no where close to related, but he seems to think we are. He mentioned that he had been the 'black sheep' of his family, preferring to be a dungeon master, rather than marry and be a 'true' noble. He seemed congenial enough and was very happy to see our metalworks, as

well as our animal containment area. We even had three zebras in cages for him to get started on. Though I think we're running a little low on food supplies so they'll likely go straight to the butcher's when he's done.

We also got two miners, a carpenter, a stoneworker, a thresher, five peasants (one with a chick and a yak calf), a ranger to replace our loss, a wood burner, a pair of twins surprisingly, fishers both of them, a metal crafter, miller, woodcrafter, fishery worker, animal caretaker and second thresher. I don't think I missed anyone, but with twenty two new mouths to feed (fourteen of them female) things will get interesting around here.

I've taken the time to designate another floor of housing for the newcomers and have requested more beds made, in addition to expanding the barracks in the mean time. This brings our population to over eighty now, a significant amount, though with the forced migration and only few places being large enough to accomodate the masses, it's not truly that surprising. With the burgeoning military supplies I suspect we may have to finally establish a fortress guard and decide on a captain of the guard. I doubt Ragnar would accept again, knowing the less appealing tasks of such duty far too well.

Perhaps it would be good for Kolok, though. His injury, though significant, may be, according to Pete, treatable, should an anti-venin be able to be obtained. But where such things can be gotten none know. Which means, for the time being, no sparring. He does keep busy directing the lumbering, and tinkers in the carpenter's shop from time to time. I think I'll ask him to take care of the remainder of the prisoners we have in our cages. I'll need as many as possible empty.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **March 03, 2009, 04:22:47 pm**

((To bad he won't be able to get a Fey mood now. :-\ Still you got a realy great artifact out of it. This should keep our champions well defended when the daemons has to be banished from our realm.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 03, 2009, 07:25:59 pm**

11th of Hematite

Paulus stepped through the blood-red stone doors into the trade hall of their home, sword at his side this time, rather than in hand. He glanced quickly to the west, where Oddbodd and his mechanics were getting the prisoners cages rigged. He would be glad when that was taken care of.

Turning to greet the tall black-skinned human he nodded deeply. "Jambo, my friend, and welcome to our hall."

"Mah, we thank you friend-Paulus for your welcome. We have brought much to trade with you that I think you will like. Come and let us look before we discuss what the future will bring."

He walked me over to the wagons and pulled back a heavy rope-reed tarp, revealing the contents of the wagons they had brought. In the front of the wagon were piled several metal bars. Celestrium, with it's characteristic white-shimmer, but also zinc, tin, nickel and gold and a smattering of others. Behind them lay rows of barrels, full and empty and slightly dusty hide-wrapped packets of dried meat. At the back lay the assorted other goods, some clothing, bins of cloth, thread and leather as well as assorted weapons and crafts.

"It's a nice load, no?"

The dwarf nodded, eyes repeatedly being drawn towards the metals.

"Aye, It's a very good load. We'll see that you get a fair trade for it, and then some."

The diplomat laughed deep in his belly.

"Ah, but that we are not worried about. You've done well by us in tradin'. Perhaps you'll allow some of our people to come see your metal-working techniques some time. The copper shields you sold us last year were very popular among the tribes. Not as good in war as iron, but very pretty."

"Hmm... I'm afraid that's not something that I can grant at this time. But we shall see. Come let us talk then of things to come."

The two wandered up to the dining hall where they sat as dwarves passed by them, the welcome scent of moisture in the air coming from the halls behind them to the north. Trade went well, but in the end the dwarf's patience was less than the human's.

"I don't need ta look over the agreement. It looked fine ta me the first time we went over it. So, I'll bid you good day. And good trading."

The human nodded and they bowed slightly to each other, dwarf heading west, towards the sounds of sparring again. The human merely smiled, pocketed his paperwork and made his way downstairs to the wagons, marvelling at the strange manner of life these dwarves had.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 04, 2009, 01:24:50 pm**

22nd of Hematite

Kolok clenched his axe as he stepped into the chamber. It hadn't changed much except for the new cages placed in here. It still was dimly lit and reeked of death. Rubble still cluttered the floor as it was a low-priority area in terms of cleanliness. It didn't bother him, he was becoming inured to such conditions. Three tigermen and a goblin crouched in cages before him and with a slight click the door locked behind him and the cages opened.

Only one of the prisoners attacked, the others waited near the back of the room for a possible break, or chance that might mean freedom. The lone tigerman, a massive male of the species let out a roar and charged Kolok but the dwarf was easily up to such a challenge. He met it head on, claws screaming on steel but not penetrating. His axe cut into the creature's leg, but not too deeply, a twisting away was all that saved it from losing a limb. They retreated a step to gauge each other and as the cat leaped in Kolok brought his axe down in an overhead chop, cutting into the creature's lower back with a sickening crunch. Quickly the tigerman dropped and did his best to roll away, taking the axe out of Kolok's grasp, stuck in the wound.

Kolok knew he might be in trouble then and pounced on the creature, trying to grapple with it and wrest away his axe again. The others emboldened by the loss of dangerous weapon began hesitantly advancing.

The pair of combatants rolled on the floor and in a display of strength Kolok pinned an arm beneath him, snapping it back savagely and breaking it. It wasn't enough to give him too much advantage though, and he was already breathing heavily from exertion. He only saw the two other tigermen, crouching nearby, waiting for a sign of weakness to pounce, it wasn't until he heard the click behind him that he realized that the goblin had managed to pick the lock with a bone held in it's hand.

With a snarl he called out the alarm, as the four thieves sprang up, united in their desire to flee and made for the door. Ragnar was there to greet them, axe in hand and with grim determination he laid into the leader, the wounded tigerman as Kolok came up from behind. The others made a bolt for the unlocked doors behind him and came out in the brilliant glow of the central trade hall, to surprised looks of shock from all nearby.

The human caravan guards heard the call and decided to join in on the sport, a volley of crossbow bolts being loosed and a pair of lean long-limbed hunters springing forth to catch up to the fleeing creatures. The chase was on and three of the thieves began sprinting

towards the exit as Ragnar and Kolok emerged from the room, having finished off the leader.

The three were almost around the bend when stones dropped out beneath them and they were caught again in traps, but the third jumped the gap and made a break for freedom. The goblin laughed lightly to himself as he rounded the bend, putting him out of reach of the hail of bolts. There was a reason that intelligence paid off. The tigersmen had been too eager to go ahead, and had all paid for it. He almost grinned as he ran until he heard a call from behind him.

"Noooo, ye don't ye cowardly little meatsack! I'll teach ye ta run from me!"

He glanced back in time to see Ragnar rounding the corner just paces behind him, easily matching his speed despite the weight of full plate and the goblin knew fear. Another dwarf appeared behind Ragnar, unbeknownst to the goblin and with a swift clack Fre sent a bolt off at the goblin, striking it in the leg and breaking it's stride, sending it crashing down to the polished stone. It had time to look up just as Ragnar's copper axe came crashing down on it's head.

Kolok stood near the depot, disappointed in his own performance as Paulus came up beside him, laying a hand on his shoulder.

"Don't worry Kolok. We all have our bad days."

"Aye, I know, but it's my fault they escaped. Bloody axe got stuck."

Paulus shrugged.

"It happens. Come with me, we'll get a new one for you."

"I know where they are, I'll just get another from the pile."

Paulus shook his head. "No. I forbid it. You'll not touch another copper axe if I have a say about it. Ye don't spar, so there's no point in you using copper. Let me show you your new weapon."

They walked up to the barracks to the south wall, where a newly hung door graced a space. Passing through it Kolok saw wooden stands for armor, yet empty. Another door was off to the side. They went through that as well and here in an unfinished room stood a half dozen weapon racks, only three had weapons at all. Two gleaming and unused battle-axes and one gleaming mace. The mace and one axe shone like polished steel, only brighter but the third axe was nearly white, rather than the silvery steel look.

Paulus pointed to the third axe.

"That one's yours. It's made of anurite, easily twice as hard as steel and with the extra hardness we can put a better edge on it, so considerably sharper as well."

Kolok took up the fabulous weapon in his hands. It felt light as a feather compared to the other weapons he'd used, and he knew he would not easily tire wielding it. He grinned in spite of himself.

"It's a fine weapon indeed."

"Aye, and were you ta have to buy it yourself it'd cost you over ten thousand ingots. As it is, consider it yours."

Kolok nodded. Here was a mighty weapon indeed.

"I think Ragnar and Fre went to secure the entrance while we clean up after the thieves. I'm sure they wouldn't mind the company."

Kolok nodded, then turned to Paulus and smartly saluted him before heading out.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 04, 2009, 07:35:22 pm**

((Continued apparently))

No sooner had Kolok headed down towards the trade depot when he heard shouts of alarm coming from the entry halls. An ambush had shown up at the entrance. He could see Fre ahead of him in the hallway begin running towards the entrance and knew she'd been refilling her quiver, leaving Ragnar up there by herself.

He grabbed the haft of the axe near the head to keep it from swinging dangerously as he ran and made his way up the ramp. His armor was somewhat cumbersome, and slowed him somewhat, but he dogged on, soon passing the remains of the the escaped goblin thief. A short while later he was amazed to see the remains of another thief, this one sneaking in, that had been cloven in half and had a bolt sticking out of it's back.

He could hear Fre's steps in the hall just around the bend and an astonished gasp as she came up the ramp leading to the entrance. Sunlight streamed in as he approached, shedding more than ample light on the situation.

Ragnar stood, back to the wall, furiously fending off nearly a half dozen goblins from the ambush party. One of them, a hammergoblin, lay bleeding and broken behind the group, but four wrestlers were trying to get a grip on the finely worked steel to allow the leader, a speargoblin to get in a killing blow. All of them looked slightly worse for the wear and one or two of them would occasionally pass out. One was missing an arm.

The -clack- of Fre's crossbow brought Kolok out of his surprise and he charged into the fray. A bolt flew by him, burying itself into the back of a wrestler, leaving it immobile on the ground, bleeding out it's final moments of life. As Kolok came upon the fray Ragnar gave a mighty shout and threw the remaining few goblins off of herself and brought her axe down upon a prone goblin with a sickening crunch.

The clean-up seemed to be a short affair after that. Kolok only got two real swings in, the first cleanly severing a leg and the second cutting the speargoblin in twain. The others broke and fled, and though Ragnar and Fre were able to bring down another of the wrestlers, one managed to escape, clutching at it's painfully injured arm.

Ragnar grinned.

"Now, that's what I call action. Been too long since we've not had a proper bit o' fun with da greenskins."

Fre laughed heartily, clapping her friend on the back.

"Aye, brings back good memories, eh?"

The three nodded as they waited for the clean-up crews to arrive. They'd remain stationed there until the area was secured again, before heading back down below.

((Fre got 1, Kolok 1 and Ragnar got the rest I'm afraid, despite using a copper axe.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 05, 2009, 03:33:22 pm**

27th of Hematite

I'm afraid things have just taken a decided turn for the worse. Pete came in to tell me as I was sparring today. I hadn't seen Ragnar nor Kolok for a little while and was wondering what was going on.

It seems they have both sustained injuries while attacking the goblins that attacked us the other day. Neither felt their injuries were severe at first but they've come down with a high fever and serious infection. Ragnar is worst and both of her upper arms are so badly swollen and red I hope she doesn't lose them. Kolok too thought he only had a scratch on his side until it became septic. Pete suspects that the goblins may have been using poisoned weapons and is doing what she can to help them recover. I've no idea how long it may take though.

In addition, it seems that Tholtig's body was found near the entrance to our fortress while clean-up from the ambush happened. Fre is the only one capable of coherent speech that was there and she only vaguely remembers seeing him there during the fight. Seems he simply wantered up to watch the carnage and, unafraid, went about his business of collecting bones for his carving. The wounds are consistent with those Kolok and Ragnar received, so I can only assume it was the goblins.

I get the strange impression that I should have spoken with him more about what is going on. This growing schism in the clan disturbs me.

I'd not have thought that a single ambush squad of goblins could wreak so much havoc to my plans, but with Ragnar and Kolok laid low and attacks becoming more frequent I fear things shall quickly become dire if we do not purge the inner demons. I do not know if they are able to send for help somehow, but I now work night and day to train myself, and now, unfortunately the countless others that I fear it will take, now that my two most capable melee fighters have been temporarily disabled. The longer we wait the more likely we are to be attacked and have our greatest fears set loose upon us.

I can only hope for their speedy recovery.

((Seriously, I had thought things went just fine, neither was flashing injured, and now both are bed-ridden. Sigh. Ragnar has red wounds on BOTH upper arms and Kolok has a red lower body wound. Apparently Mayday's goblins are considerably tougher. ;D Yay! (and boo for the injuries though)))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 05, 2009, 07:19:59 pm**

26th of Malachite

I've taken a bit of time during a break to write this. The second child was born in the fortress today. A girl, to Solon, the Animal dissector/military in training. I can only hope that we are successful below so the children may have a place to grow up.

I begin to worry now how hard I am pushing everyone. But there is simply no time. With two of our seasoned fighters down it wouldn't take much to cause severe complications. How I long for the days when we had a large body of able defenders. What I wouldn't give for Urvad or Fath now. I fear it unlikely I will ever see them again, as most of the military is engaged in rear-guard action across the ocean still and may not have the chance to come any time soon.

I feel though, that I must push hard. Both myself and others. I dare not let too much time pass before finishing the work, though at least for now it is not common knowledge. Kolok and Ragnar both mutter about it in their delerium and I fear it is only time before it becomes known. Whether I will have a mutiny and abandonment of this place or firm committal to press on will reflect the true character of the clan I suppose. I only hope that our morals have not become too diluted by comfort.

At least I can justify not going easy on the military. They have no choice but to be tough, whether we fight our inner demons or no. The goblins are coming. There is little doubt of that, and all will be put to the test soon enough. Fre's mastery of the crossbow is profound already and she continues to learn. I am the most skilled swordsdwarf we have, and with Ragnar and Kolok disabled that leaves Bomrek, formerly of Scott's squad and head axedwarf. Crush, naturally has taken to the mace and is good with it. He's even taken on a few protegees, but of the other weapons there are few that have distinguished themselves.

I shall have to train them harder. Or else no child of our race shall have a future.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 06, 2009, 04:27:22 pm**

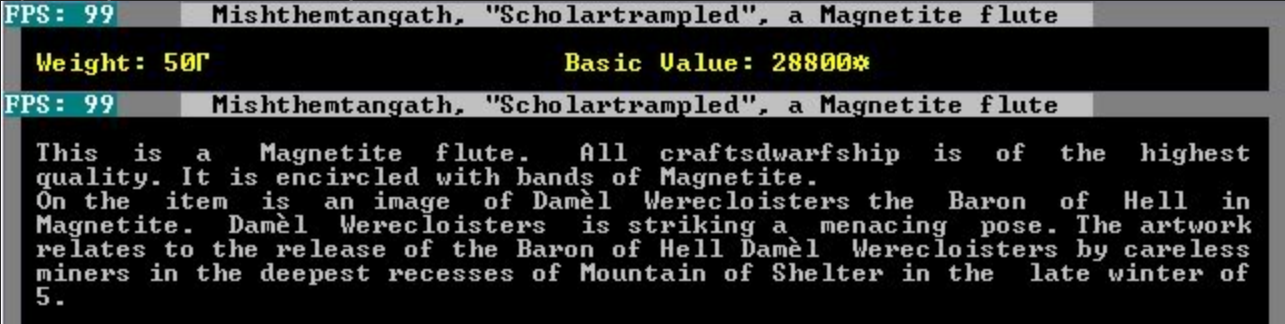
27th of Galena

With Crush being so busy training with me it seems that he's lost some standing in the eyes of the civilians. Elections were held this year, and it seems that Oddbodd was the favorite and was elected mayor. I suppose it's possible that being Ragnar's lover raised his credibility as well, since Ragnar herself is very highly regarded.

In addition, due to the extreme amount of time I've been spending training as well, it's simply unfeasible for me to get the bookwork done. Pete volunteered to take over and I've agreed. Pete is now the manager and recordkeeper. I retained the broker position as I'm the only one currently with skill in it, and we'll need the trade goods.

In slightly more disturbing news, I'm afraid the cat's out of the bag now. Bembul, a woodcutter under Kolok was taken with a mood today to craft something. It's a splendid piece of work but I wish that she'd been a little more discreet about what she heard from his fevered ramblings. I'm also not quite sure if the name given to it was meant as a barb for me or not, since I am likely to be the scholar in question. Perhaps she holds me responsible for Kolok's state of health.

Spoiler (click to show/hide)



If that didn't get the word out, it seems that some of the engravers took a liking to the theme and decided to do a few replicas of their own. I nearly strangled them, but fortunately the dungeon master has both a sense of confidence in us and a sense of humor. I sure as stone wouldn't want SIX engravings of that in my bedroom. Particularly since I was the miner in question.

Spoiler (click to show/hide)



((Ragnar is recovering in a sick-room on the lower left. Kolok is a few doors east. Most of our bedrooms are in this area. In case any of you caught this, I've gone back and changed the name to reflect actual knowledge of the enemy leader mentioned in the pics.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **March 06, 2009, 06:01:21 pm**

I'm a mayor?
An eccentric mechanic from a doomed city is a mayor.
This will be *fun*.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 06, 2009, 06:05:10 pm**

((Yup, don't worry, we're wrapping up here soon with this one, but I've got plans within plans, as it were, for Oddbodd.))

9th of Limestone

The dwarven merchants showed up on our horizon again today. Which regrettably means that I'm needed below. I suppose it was time I took a break from sparring in any case. But that didn't mean that I was likely to do these guys any favors after last year. Tholtig, may he have found what he was looking for, is no longer among us, and so no longer a cause of contention. I was not happy with the look the merchant got when told that he'd died. In fact, had I my sword strapped to my hip I might have buried it in his brain-pan then and there.

They did, however, bring all of our requested goods. I was grateful for that at least. It would be enough food and drink to last through winter without difficulty. In addition to a vast supply of towercaps and many metal bars. Among them were four celestrium bars, as well as the same number of raw ore. We purchased them all and nearly had to give away every scrap of trade good to get them. Well worth it in my mind.

I let Pete deal with the liason and headed straight down to the smithy to let them know of the acquisition when I heard several shouts from above. Thieves had been spotted outside and one of our craftsddwarves had been attacked by a goblin. He was found crupled up on the sands, just inside the entrance, severe gashes on his left hand as well as potentially dangerous wounds on his arms in a few places. He was brought below and placed in a sick-bed in the barracks.

While I was out of the barracks I also took care of some of the design aspects that I've put off for far too long. The well I finally designed, using Crush's microcline block. We'd obtained a second block of microcline from the merchants and I used that as a ceremonial cornerstone for our outside walls, which, I've begun drawing up plans for. We still need more stone blocks for that, and there is little point in sending the military out to guard the masons until we've got enough.

As a precautionary activity I took it upon myself to eliminate the captured thieves and so bolster our trade goods with their belongings. Tit for tat, as it were. We now also have many empty cages.

((Things are progressing well enough. As a side note... you may all be amused by this, but I've been getting spammed messages of large cave spider young being born. Lots of them. The chasm is rapidly filling up with them. So, kudos to Mayday for making breeding LCS', now if I could only capture and tame them... and see if they're war-trainable... ;D))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **March 06, 2009, 10:14:14 pm**

We can do a Harry Potter-style trap. Have a large chamber with floodgates and a metric hell-ton of spiders inside, to unleash upon the goblins.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **March 06, 2009, 10:41:00 pm**

Paulus...You have an avatar!? Since when?

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **March 07, 2009, 12:32:13 am**

Since his wizard ran out of spells.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **March 07, 2009, 06:40:26 am**

Only by breeding spiders can we capture the cave-bees.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 07, 2009, 03:37:33 pm**

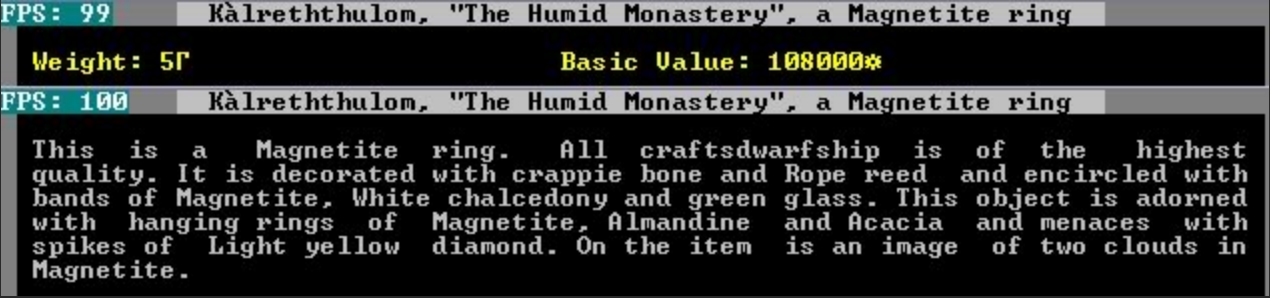
((The avatar is recent actually. I tend to be wizard-prone and this one really appealed to me. As far as cave bees... do they actually serve a purpose? Can I extract delicious cave honey from them?))

4th of Moonstone

Things for the well system are progressing apace, despite a peasant getting trapped on the wrong side of a floodgate installed in the upper channel. The rubble has been completely cleared from the channel and it's almost ready to go. I've asked Oddbodd to take care of the linkages and he's stashed the levers that operate the water flow in the old kimberlite vein beyond the dining hall. The western lever operates the entrance into the upper channel, allowing it to fill. A second, smaller floodgate was also installed in the roof above the four downspouts in the ceiling of the well room to control flow better. The well itself is dug and cleared also, and the lower door locked to hold water. So everything is essentially in place for it's operation, with the exception of the drain.

For obvious reasons.

We've also had a child be possessed and claim a crafts dwarf workshop. He grabbed a vast assortment of items, including three chunks of magnetite ore, and some of the light yellow diamonds. His work is impressive, but not particularly useful. Perhaps it shall be a gift to King Tosid when he arrives.



Training continues well, and thanks, in no small part to Aardvark's armor and the metal, courtesy of Pete, Oddbodd and, strangely, Der Kartoffel, who has been helping out at the smelters, no lasting training injuries have been sustained. I dare not take any unskilled fighters when we go, but I think that if we take our best, and equip ourselves well, it may be sufficient to carry the day.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **March 08, 2009, 02:30:23 am**

Nice to see things progressing

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)
But i hope that there's no spirits of fire in your HFS! or at least, not many.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **March 08, 2009, 10:44:38 am**

Actually there's no such thing as a cave bee.
The only bees are in my mind.
Oh god the bees.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Aardvark** on **March 08, 2009, 02:25:43 pm**

[Quote from: Maggarg - Eater of chicke on March 08, 2009, 10:44:38 am](#)

Actually there's no such thing as a cave bee.
The only bees are in my mind.
Oh god the bees.

The old Flem Comics?

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 09, 2009, 01:39:54 pm**

((What do you mean there is no such thing as a cave bee?

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



They die all the time in the cave spider and large cave spider webs near the chasm. In fact, they're the reason I cannot simply leave 'Dwarves gather refuse from outside' on.))

25th of Moonstone

We've suffered from yet another ambush today. I find it quite disturbing that the goblin activity has increased so drastically here. I was one of the few prepared to respond, and of those, undoubtedly the quickest. By the time I got topside to see what was going on I was able to notice that there were only six goblins. One, the leader, was chasing Der Kartoffel, another was after our leatherworker and the remaing four were after one of our weavers. I immeadiately took off after the four, and quickly began running them to ground. When I got close three of them broke of to engage me. A fatal mistake on their part.

By the time I caught up with the fourth chasing the weaver the rest had realized their losses and began running away, leaving our civilians alone. Der Kartoffel and the leatherworker were fortunate to have kept their wits about them enough to run well.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 10, 2009, 01:41:30 pm**

12th of Granite

Nearly a score of dwarves stood gathered in the barracks, clad in resplendant and glossy high steel plate. Another half dozen stood to one side, crossbows at the ready, quivers full of celestial steel bolts. There was little more they could do to prepare, but the nervous tension was palpable in the room.

As Paulus entered a low hum of whispers ran through it. He'd called them all together so that he could adress them before they headed out. He stood in front of them, Slapflooded gleaming in the torch light of the barracks. He cleared his throat and was about to speak when a dwarf slammed open the door and ran to his side, whispering in his ear.

"What do you mean the elves have arrived to trade? Is it that time of year already?"

He sighed and thought for a moment. He didn't trust them, and neither did many of the others.

"Very well, Tun, take your marksdwarf squad and post watch there for the duration of their stay. You'll help cover the entrance against thieves as well."

Their newest ranger saluted smartly and led half a dozen others with him down and out to the trade depot to await the elves.

The other dwarves had relaxed slightly when Paulus cleared his throat again to get their attention. They quieted down quickly and he began:

"Now, as some of you know we've got a threat to our fair fortress that's been stewing for some time. It's long since time we took care of it. I know some of you are still a little inexperienced, that you have concerns, and I assure you, I share them.

But take a look down at your armor. It's High steel, of Aardvarks make and a better armorer I've not seen in my life. That armor will turn aside all but the strongest of blows from most mortal races and should serve us well as we fight the immortal ones as well. The weapons you have were forged by Pete herself, and are either High steel as well, or, where experience warrants, celestial steel even. Equipped as such and with the training you've received I would expect even half a dozen of you to decimate squads of goblins with ease.

But..."

The door burst open again and Paulus whirled on the agitated dwarf.

"Bloody Hell, what is it THIS time?"

The young recruit in training blanched.

"Sir, it appears that we are besieged. A vile force of insectmen have appeared on the horizon and are guarding our exits."

Paulus put his head in his hand for a moment and cursed silently. Things were never simple.

"Very well. Have the civilians brought in. Secure the gates. You lot," He said, pointing to the more inexperienced soldiers, " You'll stand guard at the gate for the time being. The siege can wait, but I want you to form up in front of the archers should the attack be launched and our gates fall. Bembul, Crush, Litast, Fre, you're with me. We strike now before anything else can show up to stop us."

The five headed out, passing through the well room, into the alcove tucked in the back of it. Several grim-faced dwarves on break and relaxing near the soothing microcline well looked on, but did not speak. A trio of masons followed close behind, stopping only on the other side of the door and at the top of the stairs that led below.

When the group reached the darkened passageway that had been intended for a drain Paulus signaled for a halt.

"Bembul, this is where we part company. You're the only one apart from us that has the skill and equipment to withstand such foes. Honestly, I'm relieved the others did not have to come, it likely would have been the cause of much death and little good.

I'm asking you to remain here as a rear-guard. Should the rest of us fall I want you to give a shout out to the masons above. They've been instructed to wall us all in and release the river into the drain should we fail. You're to hold the passageway as long as you can before falling back."

Bembul's disappointment showed on her face, but she understood the reasoning and saluted smartly before detaching herself from the group.

"Aye, I understand. It's something your brother might have said as well. Best of luck to ye."

Paulus nodded and the group continued on to the two rooms prepared for the confrontation. A corner had been fortified and had a bin full of bolts for Fre to use. A door secured the fortifications and could be closed behind them, sealing them in. A narrow passageway led to the front room, and in the opposite wall the sealed doorway leading below.

The foursome took up positions, Fre behind the fortifications, Crush on one side of the passageway, Paulus on the other. He took a heavy iron key from a leather strip around his neck and handed it to Litast.

"Litast, you're tasked with removing the wall. Just do it quick like and then run like hell back here, sealing the doors behind you. That should give you enough time to suit up again and join us."

Crush's protegee swallowed once and nodded, setting aside his shield and mace and heading down the passageway into the silent room beyond. The wall was still there and it took some doing to remove the blocks that had been mortared in place as well as free the rubble beyond. In a cascade of dust the final stones came loose and Litast ran back.

In the ensuing silence a single voice called out.

"Damel Werecoisters, we've come for you."

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **March 10, 2009, 02:30:21 pm**

Quote from: Paulus Fahlstrom on March 09, 2009, 01:39:54 pm
((What do you mean there is no such thing as a cave bee?

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



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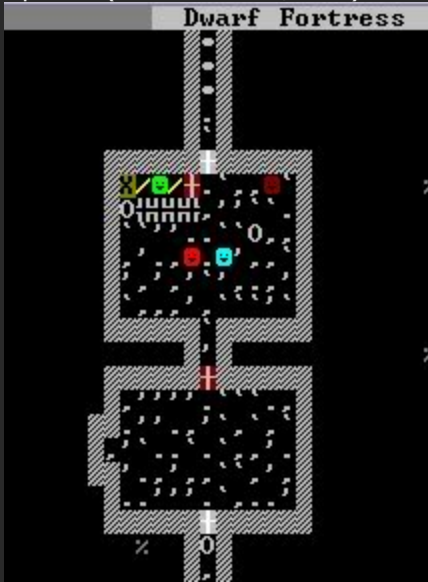
By the time I caught up with the fourth chasing the weaver the rest had realized their losses and began running away, leaving our civilians alone. Der Kartoffel and the leatherworker were fortunate to have kept their wits about them enough to run well.

BEEEEEEES
Vicious insect-men as well :(

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 10, 2009, 06:37:44 pm**

((Legendary Lands HFS Spoiler alert.))

Spoiler (click to show/hide)



Silence greeted the four dwarves as the wall went down and except for the challenge issued, no sound came fourth until a thick cloud of sulfurous air had billowed out of the unearthed chamber. With it came strange garbled sounds, the sounds of murmuring and the flutter of wingbeats. With unearthly grace the smoke and mist parted in front of them and out of it appeared a being unlike any they had expected to see. It seemed to be an angel, with large wings and radiating a sort of light. She was clearly distraught though and trails formed on her soot-covered face as she approached the quarted. In silence they waited, assuming she would make the first move, be she friend or foe.

But only her lips moved and little sound that was intelligible came forth. She spoke but only to herself and in her own mind. A parting in the smoke behind her revealed the stone doors, lying destroyed on the floor and without aggression she flew past the stunned dwarves and bodily tore the offensive creations from the wall, destroying them utterly before resuming her silent lament.

Paulus had been told of such beings of power, but hadn't expected to see any, much less trapped here beneath the earth. Avatar they had been called by Kashez, and a near gods as any creation since. But so melancholy was this one that she did not seem in her right mind. So intent were they all on this creature before them that, had it not been for a widening of her eyes as she gazed behind them, none might have realized the danger.

Both Crush and Paulus whirled at the last second to see an elf emerge in front of them, fingernails blackened by filth and leering at them unwholesomely. The elf did not seem possessed of such melancholy, and seeing them, struck out with his fists. Paulus was the quickest to advance and deflected the blow with his shield, but such was the force of it that in spite of it the blow sent him staggering backwards, landing on his back. He quickly rolled, putting the shield in front of him again as the elf pounced on him, trying to pound him into submission and again the blow was blocked, sending his shield flying wide. He drew his weapon in a flash and though the elf didn't hesitate the blade did not penetrate as deeply as he had expected. A bright line was scored across the elf's chest as he hissed in fury, showing decayed teeth. A sudden move from one side jerked the elf to one side as Crush brought his mace in, crushing ribs and sending the creature to the ground. Litast brought his mace down upon the elf's head and in a squelching crunch the creature stopped moving.

A clack, clack snapped them back to attention as Fre, seeing another foe appear took her chance and began unloading bolts into another elf. Paulus jumped to intercept, Cryptmirror flashing in the dim glow and the battle was joined again. The four fought in desperation, for as soon as one foe had been dispatched, another joined. Sometimes sooner. Bolt after bolt streaked home, burying itself in supernaturally strong flesh.

The four quickly found a rhythm, Paulus taking the initial assaults and doing his best to defend against the brutal attacks, but aided by Slapflooded in his efforts. Crush and Litast would come in once the elf was distracted. Often their blows were so strong that they would send bodies flying. Many a body part littered the floor around them and it grew slick with blood. The elven eyes began to glow red as they approached, eager to battle with bloodlust filling their brains.

And then, almost as suddenly as it had started, it stopped. A lull in the battle allowed them all to rest slightly, and the fighters bent over or went to one knee to recover their breath.



Out of the hellish mist strode Damel. He looked over the carnage of his minions in disgust and turned his sight on the dwarves in front of him. His initial shock had been that they were dwarves, of the mortal races so despised. But then he looked at them with his demonic sight and knew that they were more than they seemed. There seemed to be a glow about them that he knew to be the touch of order. But it was more than that.

Two of the fighters held weapon and shields of such radiance that he knew instinctively that the order-spelled metal celestrium had been infused in such abundance that even he could not have resisted such for long. The third dwarf stood in front and though his equipment bore no sign of celestial taint, he himself literally glowed with order. His sword glowed with an inner fire despite it's inferior metal and the shield he carried blazed like the sun above in his vision. It was then that he knew these were no normal dwarves. Before him stood an avatar of the dwarven gods, chosen and assigned this task. They'd been equipped and prepared and were not weak. Something he wasn't sure he could claim after his long imprisonment.

He paused, feasting on the carnage around him. Drawing in strength from the chaos and death and despair swirling around this place and he grinned. These mortals would not stand in his way for long, and then he would feast on carnage and destruction to regain his strength.

Paulus saw the creature approaching and a thrill went through him. Here, at last, was his goal. Here was the target that he had been prepared for. Seeing Damel he stepped out to meet him. And strangely the demon raised a hand, speaking in a melodius voice.

"Hold. It need not be like this. I have been trapped long underground and have seen the error of my ways. As you can see all others trapped thus have gone mad, or despaired, but I have not. Let me approach and perhaps we can come to an agreement."

Paulus hesitated. His sword clasped tightly in his hand he did nothing as Crush and Litast took up flanking positions behind him. The demon approached and he could see the graceful figure in front of him. Small horns graces his head, otherwise covered in a flowing mane of dark hair that cascaded to his shoulders. His figure seemed young, boyish, and almost feminine and he wore a clothing of the finest midnight blue silk of a strange cut. Most striking of all were his eyes, which seemed almost like the surface of a frozen lake, white with blue in an almost crystalline pattern. The flawless features took the dwarves by surprise and the demon approached to within a pace.

With a voice that bespoke both power and authority Damel simply said:

"Now, let me pass. I promise not to do any harm, only let me live and leave in peace."

Paulus' sword began lowering and the Baron of Hell smiled slightly, then it dropped all at once.

Damel had taken it as a sign that they had fallen for his wiles, but a sound interrupted his stride forward and he saw with his second sight what appeared to flash like lightning from behind the fortifications to his left. A fourth. There had been a fourth. Pain blossomed in his shoulder and he knew that that too was no mere metal. Another bolt took him in the leg and he threw himself forward at the dwarves, now braced for battle.

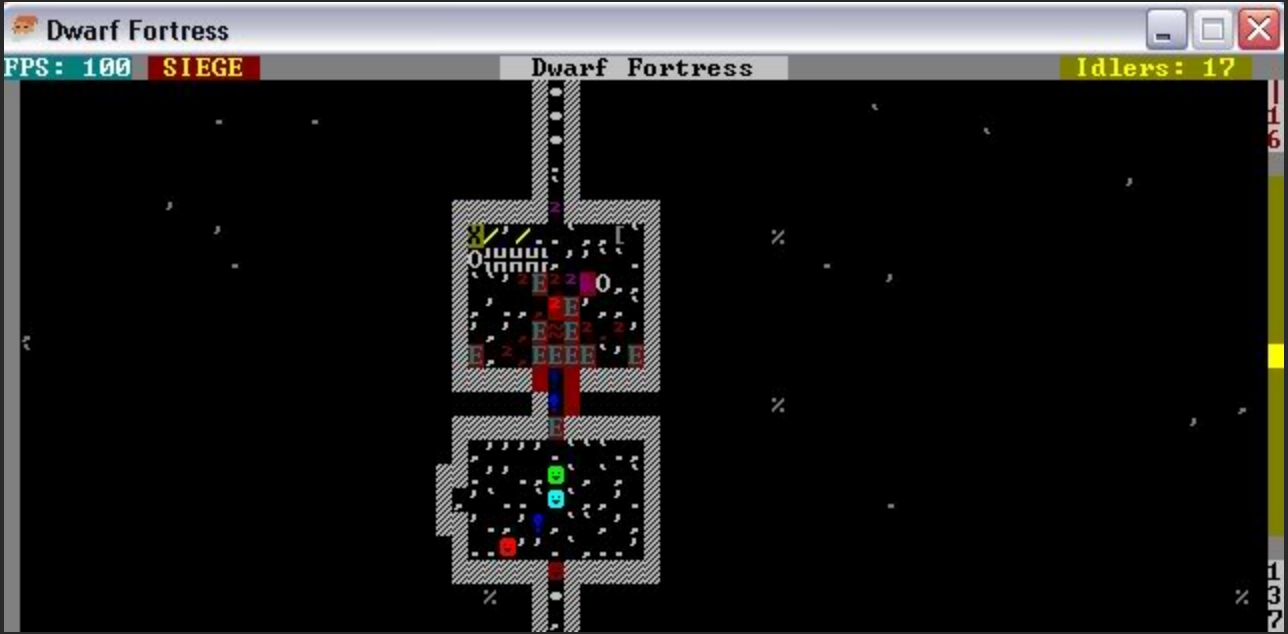
His speed and strength nonetheless took them by surprise and with a blow he sent Litast sprawling to the ground. Paulus and Crush charged, but the demon dodged again, reaching out and grabbing Paulus' arm in a vice-like grip. Ice and flame ran up his arm and the adversaries locked eyes.

"Yesss," the demon hissed, "Feel your life flowing out of you, draining..."

A blow from crush caught him in his injured shoulder and knocked him down but he was up again in a flash. Again he lashed out at Paulus, grabbing for an arm but the dwarf was ready this time and brought his shortsword up in a scything motion that severed most of the hand off, spraying him with blood. The Baron of Hell screamed in frustration, and ear-splitting shriek and struck out at Crush sending him jumping back a pace.

He brought his arm to him again and a desperation came to his eyes then. As he was about to lunge again for Paulus another swift lightning flash caught him in the throat, embedding a bolt deep into it. He tried to swallow against the pain and found that he could not. Focusing on the two enemies in front of him he neglected to watch for the third. Litast had picked himself up and striking out at Damel from behind with such force that his mace nearly embedded itself in his ribcage, shattering spine and crushing heart.

Damel Werecloisters fell to the ground. And only labored breathing could be heard in the silence. That and the mad babblings of crazed angels.



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **March 11, 2009, 03:56:24 am**

Spoiler (click to show/hide)
Oh my god. forget spirits of fire.
They've got
ELVES!

Seriously mate, very very good write up, you do very good battles.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **March 11, 2009, 07:29:49 am**

OH SHI-

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 11, 2009, 11:48:21 am**

After a quick inspection of the areas beneath their fortress the four returned up above, all but Paulus heading for the dining hall where they could get a drink or a bite to eat. Paulus and Bembul headed above to inspect the siege.

"D'ya suppose they'll come in ta play with us?"

Paulus scanned the horizon to see the group of insectmen and saw few weapons other than the natural ones.

"I don't know. I'm not familiar with this enemy. Seems like they're content to stay put for now."

Bembul grinned, hefting her axe.

"Shall we go have some fun then?"

Paulus nodded.

"Aye, let's. The others should be along momentarily. I'll cover your back, since ye didn't get any action below."

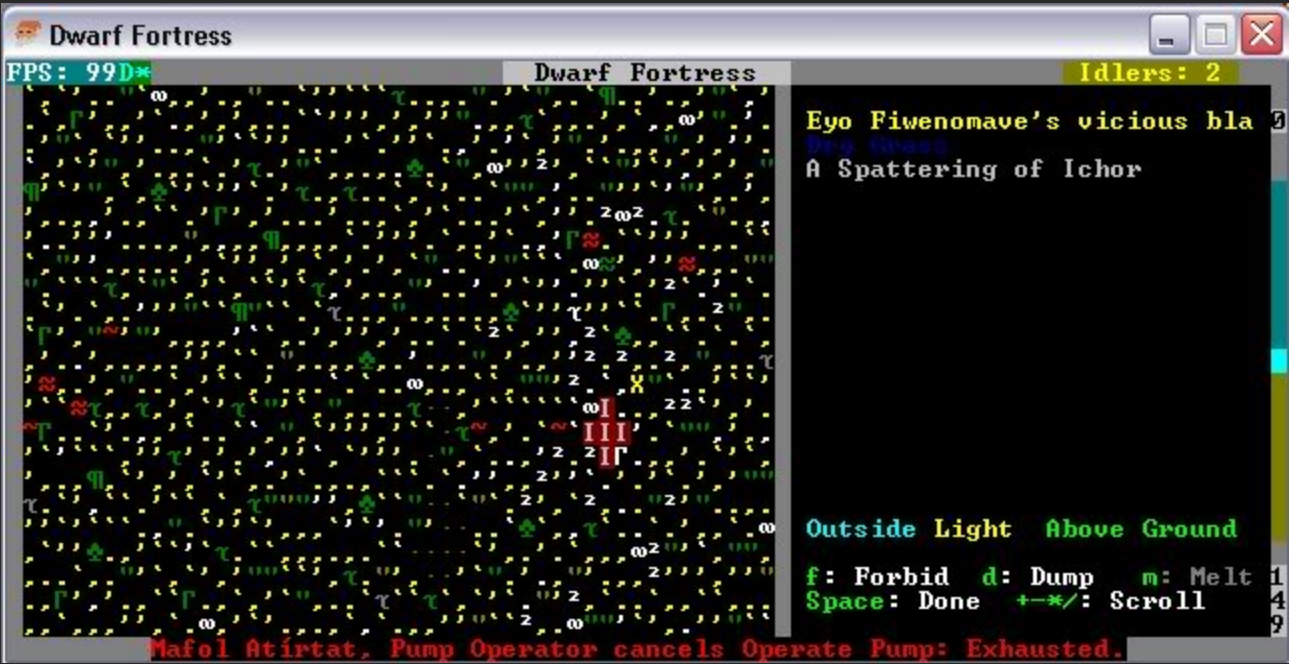
Bembul smiled and headed out, making her way quickly but reasonably stealthily along the dusty path, ensuring she kept some trees between her and their intended targets until they were closer.

The duo peeked around a large acacia tree, dark green leaves providing shade above them. Then with a mighty cry Bembul charged the group of insectmen. Their surprise was evident as several of them fluttered into the air, hovering above the fray. Bembul tore into the large cluster with such ferocity and vigor that the oversized insects were quickly outmatched. Her axe clove through chitin and flesh with ease, scattering limbs, wings, and other parts throughout the area.

Once she was almost overcome when a large group of wrestlers piled on top of her but Paulus and Cryptmirror were there, slashing, cutting and ensuring that none stayed near for long. It was a tight thing when Cryptmirror got stuck in the carapace of a fallen insectman, wrenched out of Paulus' grip. Another wrestler flew up behind him and tried to pin him, but he whirled, smashing his steel-gauntleted fist into it's head, knocking it to the ground. He pummeled it into paste, broken carapace oozing into the dust beneath it.

Then Fre was there as well, sending bolt after bolt, zooming into the creatures, and knocking them out of the air with deadly accuracy and Paulus was able to recover his sword while Bembul fended the others off. It was over quickly after that, some few wounded ones managed to fly off, while those that stayed, quickly died.

Peace came again to the fortress and the clean-up began, inside and out.



((Thanks for the comments, they're always appreciated. After the HFS the siege was kind of anti-climatic. Only 15 insectmen wrestlers. I'll try to post kill counts and such later. Amusingly, Crush's protegee, Litast, got most of the kills below. Heh. I also learned that an artifact shortsword made of Bismuth, is cool, but likely not as effective as one made of anurite, regardless of quality.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **March 11, 2009, 01:24:27 pm**

I was half-expecting demon bees, funnily enough.
Bees on the brain, I have.
(brass and iron stripes, with wings of copper filament, ah, if only I had the Engineers of Olonkulet.)

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 11, 2009, 01:59:59 pm**

((Ok... here's the stats for those interested in them.

Crush: 8 elves
Litast: 9 elves, Damel Werecloisters
Fre: 1 elves, innumerable assists. (three bolts alone in Damel)

Paulus: 2 elves, 1 Insectoid
Bembul: 13 Insectoids

Titles:
Ragnar Bookbridges the Virtuous Clutches of Barricading
Crush Findgear the Crewed Heather of Clutches
Litast Ringwades the Insensitive Excavation of Artifice
Paulus Ringpoints the Heavenly Scaly Fangs of Speech

We'll be diverging the story line here in a little bit. I'll be starting the third and final chapter, which is planned to be vast compared to the previous. Because of a strange glitch I cannot abandon this fortress and embark on another so I'll be splitting things. I've got the original unstarted world saved that I can embark from, so I'll be using that for the next fortress.

I'll continue with this fortress for as long as it is pertinent to my story line, then we'll see what happens to it. In any case, I'll have the next story up and running by the end of the week. It should be fun!

I'm designing it to be a vast fortress for adventurers and whatnot to play with upon abandon. Because of the size and story line I'll be severely limiting the population, particularly at first. In any case, I'm very excited for this next part, so I'll try to keep posting frequently until I'm caught up to current game time.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 11, 2009, 04:22:48 pm**

Paulus walked down the cluttered drainage shaft that he had dug over a year prior, stepping lightly to one side as dwarves hurried by, carrying various objects. His purpose here was a peculiar one. The only denizens to have survived were the half-mad avatar. Nothing else remained. But it was with them that he had his business.

The first he saw babbled incoherently, the second paid no attention to any of their surroundings. The others were in similar straits he found, not responding to any prompting, locked forever in their minds in the hell that had been created for them by Damel. Tucked into a corner of the upper room he found at last one who seemed to have some presence of mind. The avatar sat, crosslegged in a gleaming silver cage, and studied him as he approached.

He made no motion as Paulus reached out to examine the cage but once he had placed his hand on it the avatar's arm shot out catching him by the wrist.

"You must listen to me dwarf."

His grip was like steel, but twisting down and out Paulus broke his grip and backed away a step.

"Speak if you will, but I MUST do nothing."

The avatar bowed his head slightly.

"I see. Your race has learned much since the elder days." He gusted to the dwarven arms and armor. "Your race has nearly perfected metallurgy from what I can tell, as well as the forging of weapons and empowering them. And you have learned a great presence of mind, as well as coherent thought. Unexpected for a race with such short memories.

But it is not of such I wish to speak.

You are to be congratulated in the slaying of the Baron, Damel. His stain has been too long on this earth, and you have succeeded where so many others failed, though his weakness was an advantage to you."

Paulus studied the avatar.

"You seem to be allied with order, shall I release you then from this prison? Would you join your brethren in their freedom?"

He laughed a harsh laugh, full of anger instead of mirth.

"No, that you can even touch this cage testifies that you are not evil, as such. But my 'brethren' infused this cage with their power to keep one of us safe from the evil, to witness Damel's release, or his fall, whichever should come. By empowering this cage they were weakened, and have fallen into madness, from which I fear there is no return. Only I was protected, but this cage cannot be opened so easily, else it would have been long ago by the demons.

No, you cannot release me in the way you think. There is but one release for me. One release for all of us remaining. Your kind should know it well."

"You do not seek life then?"

He laughed again.

"Life? Do not speak to me of life. I have lived for eons, and have been imprisoned for millenia.

Life is, in a word, death.

And as such, that is what I seek now. You are a deathbringer whether you like it or not. Act as such again, not as an enemy would, but as a friend. Only the fires of the earth can truly cleanse us now."

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 12, 2009, 12:28:55 pm**

Clean up from the battles continues apace, though I wonder now if we should have let so many dwarves down into the accursed place to clean things up. Some of the images on the wall are quite ... disturbing. In any case, that is not the greatest of our concerns at the moment.

The King has arrived, dressed as a peasant.



With him came the tax-collector, Hammerer, and a pair of royalty. Fortunately we've already got rooms cut out and started and I'll likely have to ask Oddbodd to work up some suitably impressive furniture for them. Perhaps out of high-steel, platinum or aluminum. Nothing like his work to impress the newcomers I think. In any case, it seemed strange to me that they would travel all this way alone, but as they were entering I spied another dwarf off in the distance. I suspect I know who it was, though not why they've not come closer.

Only two days after they all arrived and the nobles and king were busy getting situated did I finally run into him. Led, my old friend/cell-mate from Dorenemal, and if I understood Tholtig correctly before he died, now the leader of a group of cultists.

He approached, smiling slightly.

"Paulus, you look well. Different somehow, but well."

"Aye, you too. Too skinny by far. Come in and get some food."

"I'd appreciate that, but I fear I'll be recognized by the nobles and King Tosid has recommended that I not be seen. I've been travelling with the group all the way from the coast."

He patted a bismuth bronze crossbow tethered to his belt.

I nodded.

"Ah, I wondered. Just a Hammerer as guard seemed a bit risky for the King himself."

"It wasn't really for him I came."

"Why did you come? I'm afraid Tholtig has been dead now for nearly six months."

Led rocked back on his heels slightly, surprised at the news.

"Then it is true. I'd had a dream in which he appeared to me and told me he had failed."

"Failed? In what?"

"I'd asked him to come here to establish a place where we could come and not be persecuted. If he is dead then here is not the place for us."

"Ah, it was an accident. Apparently the others died on the journey through the swamps. He was killed during a goblin ambush when he went to gather bones."

Led looked thoughtful for a moment before replying.

"Then he died well and there is no more I can ask of him. He told you of our persecution?"

"Aye, he did, and you'd have been welcome here were it up to me. The merchants got a little huffy about trading with us when they saw him, but other than that we've had no issues."

"I was concerned that it would spread, but without an established population it would be folly to move here now that it is the new mountainhome. It will be too closely watched to be safe for us."

"I'm sorry to hear that."

"Aye, me too. There is an alternative in the works, though."

"Good. If there is anything I can do to help, let me know. You are family as far as I'm concerned, regardless of who you worship."

Led cocked his head to one side and looked at me queerly, thinking.

"Then join us."

"What?"

"We need help, and I can think of no one more capable for it. Join us."

I had to think for a moment, but the more I thought the more the idea appealed to me. I could remember the societal corruption that had set in when Dorenemal had grown too large and could see the beginnings of that already here. It would only be worse with the king and royalty here now.

"What do you intend?"

"I've been busy sending out scouts to survey the land. You know who we worship right?"

"Come to think of it, no."

He smiled.

"Then let me tell you of the virtues of our goddess, Mondul.

Life is, in a word, death.

..."

He talked for some time about their deity, Mondul, but it was that sentence that struck me profoundly. The avatar had said such as well. It reminded me of what he had called me.

Deathbringer.

Perhaps that was what decided my mind. Perhaps it was that members of my clan needed help and I was duty-bound to render assistance to my friends. Led was still talking when I blurted out.

"I will go."

He stopped, abruptly. And grinned wide.

"Great, when can you leave? I've already set things in motion before I left. The most known and persecuted members of our order are to meet us at the proscribed location. They should be bringing our supplies."

"Give me three days. I'll tell my friends and arrange for departure. What should I take."

"Take a warhammer. You'll need it."

"Not a sword?"

"No. You'll see. This place we go is like a mecca to us. A place of worship and devotion, but one in which much evil exists as well. We have been commanded to cleanse it and return the evil to it's proper state. You'll want a warhammer."

I nodded.

"I'll meet you here in three days then. I'll bring supplies for our return journey."

There was much to do, and I felt an eagerness and purpose that I only now realized had been lacking after the recent battles. I would have to arrange for my disappearance. There was a swordsman in the military that I had taught. He would be willing to assume my identity so I would not be missed by those who knew me not. I would have to discreetly tell my friends. And the King. Tosid had greeted me heartily when he arrived and had been impressed with how much had gotten done. Doubly so when I showed him the adamantine deposits below, and he had promised me a boon for my work. It was time to call that in.

I wondered briefly if the others would follow after me and join me in our new home. Ragnar and Kolok were too injured to travel yet, and Oddbodd would stay with Ragnar, of course. Pete and Crush still had responsibilities in the fortress and could not so easily leave, as did Aardvark, now that his precious forges were running and he had a massive military to equip. I considered asking Fre to come, she would fit in, I felt, well enough. And I would sorely miss her cooking. But could I ask that of her? I wasn't sure.

Mondûl, "Mondûl"

Mondûl was a deity that occurs in the myths of The Passionate Corridors. Mondûl was most often depicted as a female dwarf and was associated with death.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **March 12, 2009, 03:40:49 pm**

((I'm not requesting a founder, but an immigrant in the second or third wave as Crush's nephew, Boink))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 12, 2009, 05:55:28 pm**

Year 7 Date unknown

I find that travel has been invigorating now that I've acclimated somewhat to the climate of this place. It's not so much the heat that's the problem.

It's the HUMIDITY.

But now that we've passed the lower jungles and have headed north things have begun to cool down. Occasionally we even get a whiff of salt-air that blows inland from the sea. But mostly we tramp through the moist climates that are necessary for us to cross. It's much easier and faster to travel without a wagon, and I'd definitely recommend it.

Except for the frequent spider attacks. We've been attacked by giant tarantulas nearly half a dozen times now, and Led has run out of bolts to use. On the bright side, I've gotten a little bit of practice in with this chunk of steel called a warhammer. It requires less finesse and more hitting of things, but you don't have to worry if your blade will get caught in their ribs.

It must be winter by now and we've come far enough north for there to be snow on the ground. We were attacked by a ravenous pack of wolves just yesterday and we're taking the time to augment our supplies with some fresh meat. And to process the skins at least somewhat to keep ourselves warm. We lack the supplies to do it properly, but it should keep us warm enough at night.

Led informs me that we're nearing the agreed meeting point. I can see a fog-covered mountain range off in the distance and we're to meet the others near they south-west corner of it, on a high promontory overlooking the valleys below. Occasionally a cold breeze will blow down from that direction and it brings with it a peculiar smell. Not a pleasant smell.

We've already seen flocks of geese and herons flying over us headed to slightly warmer climates but even here they seem to settle in the marshes in droves. If Led still had his crossbow and bolts it'd be a nice thing to have fresh meat again, but such is not the case. We can only hope that the others have sufficient supplies. Our are running short. They'd be enough for us to make it to Shellhelms if we needed to and could not find the others, but I hope that is not the case.

I've seen our new home, and by the glory of our goddess, it is a pretty sight. Though somewhat barren on the hills the marshes below are fertile and the hills themselves show much promise in terms of mineral content. It is a wild and untamed land now, though I wonder if it has always been such.

I'll leave off now writing. We can see the small fire that has been raised on the cliffs above us and hopefully tomorrow we shall meet with the others. I'll sketch the area with what little light remains.



((It's about as inhospitable as I could find since I really wanted the savage areas and particularly the evil ones too. I've included only those features that are visible from the surface when we arrived. The underground lake has a three space wide opening onto a steep slope, and the Magma is underneath the sand layer, melting the snow. Technically I've found the bottomless pit, but that's only because I spotted a cave bee corpse in a hidden location. I assume it's a bug. Being able to see a dead bee eight layers underground I mean, not the bee itself. Of course that's a bug.

Oh, and if you haven't noticed... Led has claimed the whole mountain range as ours. My FPS isn't great at the moment, which is why I've got temp., weather and cave-ins off. I'll periodically turn them on to see if seasonal changes cause melting. It's a freezing biome so it's possible it'll only make a difference in the summer months. If that. Also, that's why I'm restricting the population of the place rather drastically.

Maybe if and when I find the other features and clear out the critters it'll improve and I can consider larger populations. But I wanted a really large sandbox for this place. Think Moria type large. And possibly Moria type evil... somewhere. heh.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: Onol Lened, or the Mountain of Shelter (Community Fortress)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **March 12, 2009, 08:46:40 pm**

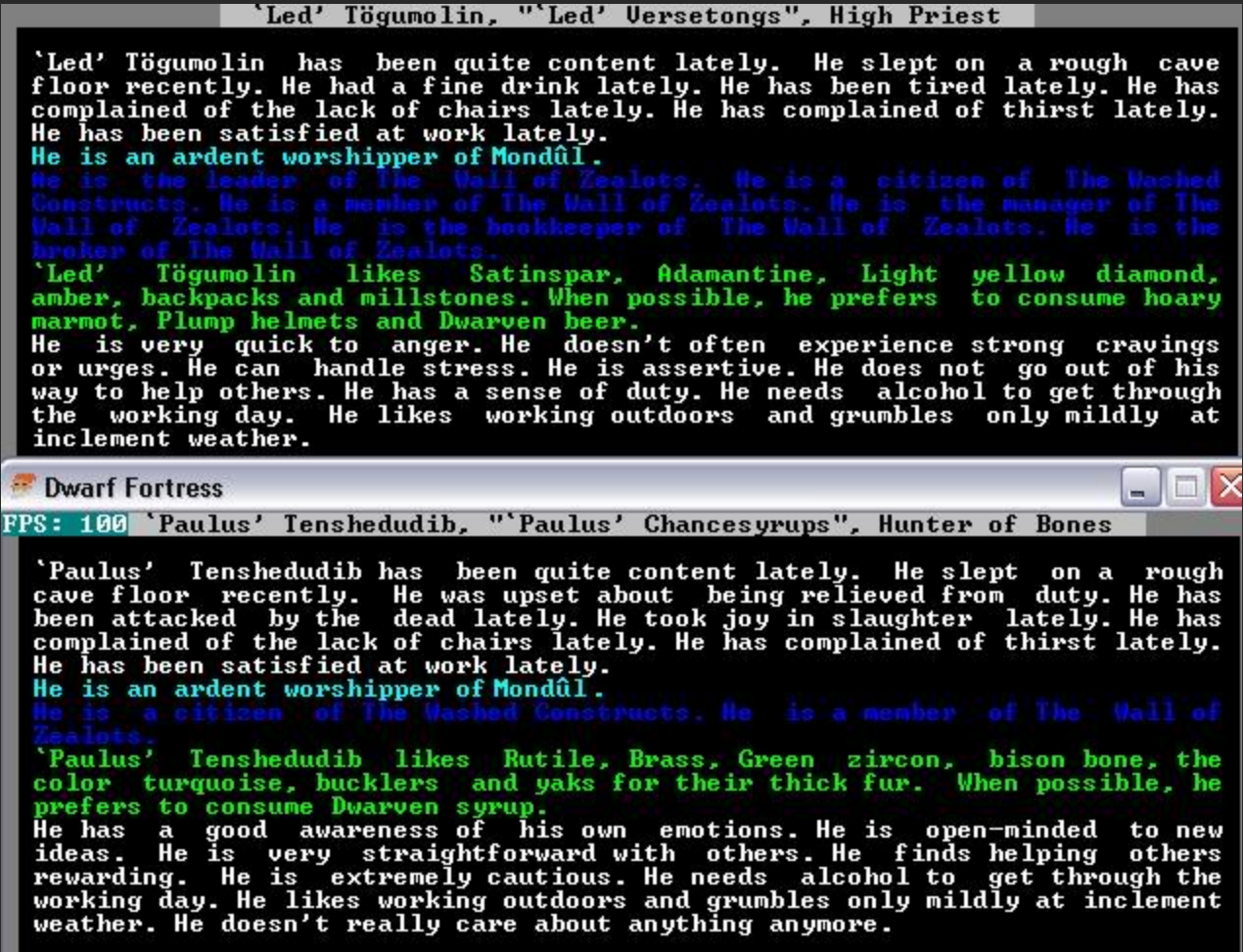
The whole frickin local map?!?!?! By Armok, you need to make a side fortress absolutely stocked with adventurer goodies.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, spaces open!!!)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **March 13, 2009, 11:25:58 am**

Do I appear with Ragnar at a later date, or do I have to request a new dorf?

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, spaces open!!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 13, 2009, 11:38:47 am**

((Ok, this is the official opening of the Fortress. Two of the founders were claimed by me, namely Paulus and Led.



There are five spots open for cultists of Mondul. So here is what I need.

Preferred character name
Character alignment (Lawful neutral is a normal dwarf in my mind.)
Aspirations (optional. The more intricate or in depth the more I'll be able to include in the story line.)

I'll reserve one of the founding five for either Fre or Der Kartoffel should they want a founder. All others should be new.

Existing characters can and will be brought in with immigrant waves.

For the immigrants or non-founders please include all of the above in addition to

-Preferred job
-Whether you are a clan cultist, clan loyalist or outsider from another tribe.

As you can imagine from the information requested I've got some fun ideas for what to do story wise while I construct this megalithic fortress to Mondul. Factions within the cult are perfectly acceptable and I intend, at least at some future date, to work in an assassins guild (for lack of a better term).

So, again, the founding five that are open are:

[Spoiler \(click to show/hide\)](#)

FPS: 99

Olon Dumatdakas, "Olon Roughcolor", Mason

Olon Dumatdakas has been quite content lately. She slept on a rough cave floor recently. She had a fine drink lately. She talked with a friend lately. She has complained of the lack of chairs lately. She has been satisfied at work lately. She has complained of thirst lately.

She is a worshipper of Mondûl.

She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Wall of Zealots.

Olon Dumatdakas likes Rock salt, Trifle pewter, Lapis lazuli, horn, the color sea green, gauntlets and cows for their haunting moos. When possible, she prefers to consume Dwarven rum and dwarven milk.

She rarely feels discouraged. She isn't given to flights of fancy. She is slow to trust others. She is very straightforward with others. She does not go out of her way to help others. She is easily moved to pity. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 99

Thob Muzishtun, "Thob Martyreddoor", Mason

Thob Muzishtun has been quite content lately. She had a fine drink lately. She slept on rocks recently. She has complained of the lack of chairs lately. She has complained of thirst lately. She has been satisfied at work lately.

She is a worshipper of Mondûl.

She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Wall of Zealots.

Thob Muzishtun likes Slate, Gold, White chalcedony, the color teal, bolts, crowns and insectoids for their gossamer wings. When possible, she prefers to consume cat and Dwarven ale.

She often feels discouraged. She occasionally overindulges. She doesn't handle stress well. She is very distant and reserved. She has a fertile imagination. She revels in chaos and disorder. She does not go out of her way to help others. She often does the first thing that comes to mind. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 99

Cerol Endokzulban, "Cerol Attichanners", Metalcrafter

Cerol Endokzulban has been quite content lately. She slept on a rough cave floor recently. She had a fine drink lately. She has complained about the draft lately. She has complained of the lack of chairs lately. She has complained of thirst lately. She has been satisfied at work lately.

She is a worshipper of Mondûl.

She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Wall of Zealots.

Cerol Endokzulban likes Limestone, Gold, Lapis lazuli, turtle shell, bolts, earrings and chickens for their soft feathers. When possible, she prefers to consume Dwarven rum.

She occasionally overindulges. She can handle stress. She makes friends quickly. She is assertive. She is rarely happy or enthusiastic. She greatly appreciates art and natural beauty. She tends not to openly express emotions. She admires tradition. She is immodest. She is organized. She often does the first thing that comes to mind. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 99

èrith Nilesdor, "èrith Hammersell", Jeweler

èrith Nilesdor has been quite content lately. She slept on a rough cave floor recently. She has complained about the draft lately. She has complained of the lack of chairs lately. She has complained of thirst lately. She has been satisfied at work lately.

She is a worshipper of Mondûl.

She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Wall of Zealots.

èrith Nilesdor likes Native aluminum, Celestial steel, Pyrite, giant mole bone, the color pink, bolts and earrings. She absolutely detests cave spiders.

She makes friends quickly. She loves a good thrill. She isn't given to flights of fancy. She has a good awareness of her own emotions. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She is immodest. She is not easily moved to pity. She is organized. She doesn't go out of her way to do more work than necessary. She has very little self-discipline. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

Both intended to be Masons and will be in charge of the great wall, which our group is named after, The wall of zealots.

And the metalcrafter, jeweler (both currently practicing mining) and the food specialist. Unfortunately all female. The masons and cook are at this stage perfectly interchangeable, so if you'd like one of the masons and would prefer to cook just say so, or vice versa. (Fre, Der Kartoffel, this applies to whichever of you two responds first and would like one, if at all.)

I'll include a short environment setting post later today and leave this open for the weekend. I'm planning on having roughly 20-30 dwarves (pop cap at 20) for a long time.

Boink, you're in the first immigrant wave. Still need profession, alignment and loyalty. Maggarg I'm hoping to bring both you and Ragnar in at a later date, preferably as a married couple.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, spaces open!!!)**

Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **March 13, 2009, 11:45:13 am**

'kay, sounds good.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, spaces open!!!)**

Post by: **Frelock** on **March 13, 2009, 02:15:53 pm**

First off, wow. Your writing is better than ever, Paulus.

I'd like Fre to come along with you. She still has yet to re-gain her title, and I'd like to see her continue on to the end.

As to the other information you requested:
Alignment: True neutral (I think she's a little too wild to be lawful neutral, but chaotic doesn't fit in the whole order/chaos war, seeing as how she's on the order side)
Aspirations: Own a small tavern, and become an expert marksdwarf. Killing that traitor Aardvark is optional.

By the way, how the heck did you get all 7 to worship the same god?

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, spaces open!!!)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 13, 2009, 03:51:55 pm**

((Glad to have you Fre. To be honest, I love your character. Along with several of the others. I'm sure I can accomodate you on all counts, except perhaps regarding Aardvark. Unless Aardvark posts and says he wants in, he may stay at Onol Lened.

As far as them worshipping all the same deity? Miracles are possible (with MS paint). I've taken some liberties there of course. Technically

Mondul isn't even a deity of our parent civilization. But she's the only dwarven deity related to death, so I went with it. Shall I assume that you're a cultist now, or a loyalist? If you want to be a loyalist I'll revert back to your original deity preferences.))

1st of Granite year 8 Spring

Even after six years or more of the unrelenting heat of the south it still felt like home to be surrounded by the icy winds and swirling snow of the north. Paulus looked up at the slope in front of them. They'd camped below the previous night, near the edge of what Led had claimed as their own territory, a vast section of land that even in a hundred years they'd not be able to fully utilize. In truth, he'd, somewhat presumptuously, proclaimed the entire mountain range of the Hungry Spine of Dung as theirs. It's not like anyone else wanted it anyways.

There was a reason we didn't travel on to the summit that night. It'd have taken most of the night anyways, but in the darkness it was nearly impossible to see the denizens of the hills themselves.

The undead.

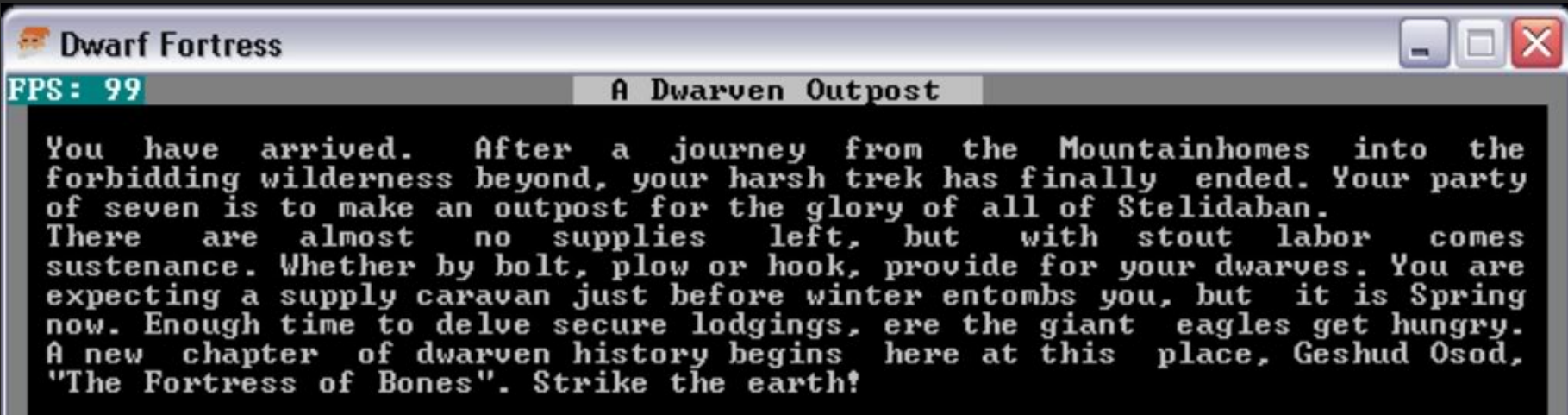
From that distance though it was possible to make out features and I'd drawn up some mining designations and plans for Led using the back pages of my journal. He was the one in charge, and I was more than happy to let him assume that. In fact, neither Fre nor myself knew any of the others there, nor were they aware of exactly who we were. Something I think was for the best.

But in the dim morning light and with our frosty breaths being whipped behind us by the wind coming off the hills we ascended the steep slope to greet the others. They seemed genuinely happy to see Led, but a bit more surprised to see Fre and myself. The four of them seemed almost distrustful, though after the persecution Led informed us of, I suppose that was understandable.

Officially Led informed them that we were there to help ensure our mutual survival and told them little else. Picks were broken out as I examined the contents of the sparsely laden wagon.

It wasn't promising. They'd brought seed of various kinds for planting, but none seemed to know the process of farming. An anvil they'd brought as well, though no axe nor any way of obtaining fuel. And pitifully little food and drink. Oh, and a pair of chickens that one of them was apparently fond of, not to mention the mangy looking horse and scrawny pony.

Keeping us alive would be a harder task than I thought. And that wasn't factoring in the roaming dead. Regardless, it was time to strike the earth and get some work done.



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, spaces open!!!)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **March 14, 2009, 01:21:50 am**

Probably a clan loyalist. I never thought of Fre as being a very religious one. She's all for the good of the clan, though. Now lets go kick some undead arse!

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, spaces open!!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 16, 2009, 12:12:52 pm**

Fre and Paulus were silent as the others chatted happily, despite the chill. When Led finally broke out the picks and informed two of his followers to grab picks and help they grudgingly complied. The three went to with a will digging into the slope just under the summit where Led had been told would be a good place.

It didn't take too long for Paulus to realize that the other two would have happily just sat around all day.

"Oi, you two lazy berks. Get to work."

One of them grunted, non-committally. "Ain't nothin' ta do, is there?"

Paulus' hand nearly flew to the hammer strapped on his back. "Well, then. Get some workshops built and start makin' blocks. We'll need 'em soon enough and I want a defensive wall built around the entrance to restrict passage."

Fre offered, "No point in waiting around for the space to be cleared. Can't put the food on rubble anyhow. So if it's not cleared you'll soon be eating rocks."

"Aye, Fre's right. And if you don't mind Fre, go ahead and do that as well, at least until the supplies can be stowed."

The three headed down to start making workshops with the stone, now carved from the summit. One of the masons could be heard grumling as she walked down, "Who, by the bloody stones, does he think he is?"

Paulus merely shook his head. Laziness would get them all killed. Grabbing up his buckler he unslung the heavy steel hammer from it's sheath on his back. It was a reassuring weight in his hands and he walked over to the edge of the slope, peering out into the white, looking intently for the shifting of snow that would indicate a shambling undead.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **March 16, 2009, 08:24:40 pm**

Haven't read about the first fort yet, but here goes-

Name: Thesaurusaurus
Profession: Bookkeeper/manager
Loves: lizard pets.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 17, 2009, 04:13:36 pm**

((Ok... I've got the founders profiles modified to include you Fre, I'll post your updated profile here shortly. In play time I've gotten to autumn and even received my first group of migrants. Useless layabouts.

Sorry Maggarg and Ragnar, no couples came with the first wave.

I'll get Boink, Thesaurusaurus, Kolok and Der Kartoffel though.

I'll need to know everybody's preferred loyalty status. Clan loyalist or cultist? Population is a 16 so I'll probably only get another wave or two of migrants.))

Journal of High Priest, year 8

Paulus has convinced me of the benefits of recording happenings from these early years and I've acquired a journal from merchants, reluctant as they were to trade with us. I'll have to go backwards in time a little to include the events of the founding, but little enough truly noteworthy has happened so it should be short.

We've worked like mad these first couple months and though the rock is hard, my fellow believers and I have managed to carve out a fairly secure holding here in the tops of the mountain. With no gems or metals to work I've pressed our crafts dwarves into mining duty with me, at least until Paulus begins bringing me appropriate material to work myself. The others have been making blocks with the stone we clear. Paulus has hinted that we'll need every block we can make and that production of them should continue, but with the available space being rapidly consumed by them and the stacks of blocks reaching the ceiling in the corners of our cave I begin to wonder.

Unlike many of my followers, who I suspect may be using our beliefs as a method of self-enrichment or fulfilling darker desires I can understandably trust Paulus. Fre as well, though to a lesser extent, as she came to help but follows her own beliefs. Her personal nature is akin enough that I see no reason to complain though, and she has served Mondul well enough in the past, albeit unwittingly. In any case, Paulus informs me that he's working on the designs for a magnificent landmark and appropriate temple to Mondul to be erected here in the tops of the mountains. We shall see.

At first some of us, notably one of the masons, Thob, were skeptical about these apparent 'unbelievers' joining us. They've since warmed up to both Paulus and Fre, though perhaps it's more of a healthy respect rather than true friendship. Fre had noticed that the food supplies were low, too low to make it until fall when the caravans would arrive and began collecting fruits and tubers from the swamp below thawing in the warmish spring air. She'd brought back some wild strawberries, a considerable amount and Thob was fancying a snack. She headed over towards the berries but Fre interrupted her.

"Oi, don't touch those. They'll be needed later once they've sweetened up a bit and set for a while."

Thob angrily bit back. "You're no' the boss o' me. I kin eat 'em if ah want."

Out of nowhere a knife appeared in Fre's hand, gleaming faintly in the light reflected off the snow outside.

A voice cut through the quarrel in a second. The smell of death roiled into the room as Paulus entered, carrying a large nearly frozen corpse.

"None o' that. Fre, put the knife away please."

Grudgingly Fre complied, slipping it equally quickly into a sheath tucked into her back belt. Thob grinned, thinking she'd gotten the upper hand and headed for the strawberries.

"Thob, don't touch those berries."

The voice was quiet, and calm, a stark contrast to Thob.

"But ... but I'm hungry and they smell good. 's no reason I can't have 'em."

Paulus heaved the corpse off into the dump in the far corner before returning and looking at her, hammer still held in one hand.

"Yes, there is. If you eat them we'll have nothing to brew for drink."

She grunted and then walked away, smiling, fully intending on coming back later when no one was looking.

Paulus' voice came after her.

"And if you touch them later I'll personally break every bone in your hand. Our only water source is infested with undead, so you're welcome to take your chances then."

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **sonero** on **March 17, 2009, 05:20:40 pm**

((Loyalist)).

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 17, 2009, 06:45:11 pm**

cont'd from the Journal of Led, High Priest of Mondul

Where was I? Ah, yes, spring.

Anyways, I was much relieved when, just before the start of summer, Paulus informed me that I now had a large amount of material to work with. Apparently he'd been out hunting undead much of the time, removing those that roamed particularly close to our location. I was particularly pleased with his destruction of a group of zombie grave hounds.

The brutes are roughly four to four and a half feet tall at the shoulder and as zombies are rather ungainly. In life they're far more intelligent and trainable, however, and the symbolism of the name was not lost on me. For his service I've made him a fine set of armor to supplement his steel buckler and he's taken to wearing a grave hound bone armor. The helm in particular gives him a grim look that I feel Mondul approves of and using the bones of the abominations that cheated death temporarily is a very fitting use of such material.

I've grown concerned about the possibility of not receiving a trade caravan in the fall, but Paulus has assured me that they would come. I'm not completely sure how he knows as we've not been on best relations with the merchants and particularly with the nobles backing them. He told me I should prepare as vast a selection of trade goods as possible and, though I lament the use of bones as a source of merchantable material, it is mostly all we have. We lack fuel for metalworks and though we could trade raw materials this is not the best thing to do.

I've prayed for guidance and have received the following inspiration.

Bones may be used for trading or mundane things like bolts providing that they are from mundane sources. This includes food sources and domesticated animals.

Bones of the undead and our enemies are reserved for more fitting uses such as display or ornamentation of our fortress, but in particular

may be used against the enemies in question.

And though I feel strongly about this I also feel it's appropriate this one time to make some goods using the bones of our enemies while we grow stronger. This commandment from Mondul has only just been handed down and not been made public and I feel she would approve the use of our bones to strengthen our position.

In that line I've begun crafting a variety of goods and have requested our other miners to hunt out all the exposed gemstones that they can find to adorn these creations with. If we're going to be trading bone crafts they will carry our mark and let the world know of Mondul's glory.

We've dug a main stair in the back of our little chamber with the intention of developing our fortress below. I understand little of the current design intentions but I'm sure Paulus has things planned out well. He does have plenty of thinking time while he's out hunting for bones.

Both he and Fre have likewise been searching out edible plants in the swamps below and come summer they've thawed enough for the lakes to melt. The water is frigid but refreshingly clear and many swans and other fowl throng the areas. Sections of the river to the south have even melted and it flows turgidly as much of it is shadowed by the peaks and remains ice-covered. This is a wild a beautiful land and I can see why Mondul would have us settle here.

I'll draw a bit of our little cave for future reference. Once we're firmly established and settled we may look back at how things used to be and rejoice in our success.



Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **March 17, 2009, 08:50:48 pm**

hmm... I'd say either loyalist or cultist, whichever one would make him less enemies of the strong variety. Also, who is Mondul?

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 19, 2009, 12:15:08 pm**

((I'll make you a cultist Barbarossa. Don't worry about enemies. Internal enemies will arrive in time but that's not for now. I'll update the bios here later today when I get to immigration and what-not. Though I won't be able to accomodate as many as I'd hoped. There simply aren't enough male migrants. Unless someone new wants to claim a male child, which I've got two of. Oh, and Mondul's entry is at the very end of page 30 for you to look at.))

Summer, 8, journal of Led, High Priest

As we've been working the bone we've acquired I noticed a terrible travesty. The bone that had been piled up in our dump outside has, for some strange reason, disappeared. I do not know if it has been theft, whether internal or external, nor if it's simply the cursed nature of the landscape that connives against us. I'm afraid I nearly beat some people over it. All of the skulls were lost and with them the glory of the trophies which could have been ascribed to Mondul. It's a decided blow, but for the life of me I don't know who did it. Most of our bone and all of our turtle shells have gone, save three which were still indoors.

((Seriously, just... gone. Don't know if they degraded in the environment or what-not. I've never had bones and skulls and shells be stolen, nor just disappear like that. It's a mystery to me.))

Thankfully I'd been able to use much of it to produce a variety of tradegoods which should be sufficient to use. Erith has been working on cutting the gems we've uncovered so far and will begin finishing the decoration of the items.

One so far has been completely finished. It's a turtle bone amulet of fine workdwarfship with a little engraven image of mountains on it. Inset on it are spikes made of Mountain goat and the alternating spikes are of gold opal. It is also banded in fire agate, which gives it a very nice lustre and sets off the turtle shell. It's a splendid item and with the gemstones set into it I can assume that it's reasonably valuable. By the time the merchants get here we'll have many more like it, with a large variety of decorations on them.

Paulus and Fre have continued to be busy gathering food from the swamp while the good weather lasts. The summer has been warm but it gives the whole area a somewhat fetid smell. I'm not sure if it's the swamp below or the years of undead infestation that causes the foul odor. Our food supplies are stable and with some trade goods we should have sufficient to purchase most of what we want from the caravans, should they arrive.

I'd like to clear the undead from the underground lake that's been uncovered, but there is such a narrow small entrance that we cannot lure the undead to us, nor is it safe to work there lest we be caught unawares. Work continues below as well. The trade road down is being worked on slowly but steadily and the fortress proper is being worked on as well. Perhaps I'll have and area designated to the east of the central stair for the work of the priesthood, while leaving the areas to the east where the fertile soil is designated as the general quarters. We'll see when the time comes.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **March 19, 2009, 03:37:10 pm**

((bones outside will be bleached away or somesuch effect. They only get preserved indoors, which is why I have outdoor 'corpse' refuse piles to prevent miasma, and indoor 'remains' refuse piles to keep the useful by-product)).

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 20, 2009, 11:50:58 am**

((Hmm... never knew that. Well, I'll just have to be more careful. I lost all the shells I hadn't used except three. So no more decorating with shell for a while I guess. Sigh.))

Early Autumn, The Hungry Spine of Dung

The merchant grumbled as his wagon hit another rock in the path they were taking to their next stop. A stop that they prefer not to be making. The guild leaders, along with the nobles that supported them would prefer that no trade happen with these ... freaks at all. But after returning from Onol Lened the caravan had been given new orders. From the king himself.

He sighed again heavily as they rolled through the chill air. Looking out over the caravan he took in the patrolling guards.

"Oi, you lot. Keep you're eyes open. There's a reason no one ventures into this mountain range here much."

One of the soldiers saluted briefly and fell back to tell the others before trotting up again to resume his post. Another of their soldiers appeared over the small rise in front of them, saluting briskly to his superior.

"Oi Sir. From here it goes into a small valley before hitting the slopes we want ahead. If you look carefully up there, "He guestured into the light fog ahead of them and up" you can make out the Depot on the crest of the hill. But there is a small swarm of undead ahead of us."

"Kind and number soldier?"

"Demon rats, about a dozen I'd say in two clusterings near each other and to the east of the best path up from here."

The soldier thought briefly for a moment, then nodded and made a hand signal over his shoulder behind him. Shortly two more trotted up, a macedwarf and a hammerdwarf.

"Ingish, Tun, follow Kivish here and dispose of the undead ahead of us. Be careful, but I don't expect it to be too difficult for the three of you."

The pair saluted and the threesome trotted off ahead of the caravan at a fast pace. And by the time the caravan drew abreast of the scene only twitching remains of long since dead limbs remained.

As the caravan approached the Depot a single figure stood there to greet them, guarding what appeared to be the bins of goods. He was strangely attired, clad in a stout leather shirt and breeches, but covered in bone armor of curious origin. The helmet was fashioned from bone as well, the large skull of a dog protecting the dwarf, upper canine teeth intact in front of the dwarf's face. It had been banded with another type of bone, quite cunningly and gave a frightening appearance. The gauntlets and greaves strapped to his arms and legs were likewise made from grave hound bone, and covered in small spikes made from other bones as well. Even his shield and hammer had been decorated with bone, a small scene visible on the side of his hammer and spikes decorating the front of his shield.

His appearance was fearsome and only his eyes were visible from underneath the helmet, bones crossed his lower face. The soldiers appeared somewhat nervous, they knew very well that the caravan hadn't intended to stop here originally. The merchant climbed down and approached the figure.

"Are you of the Wall of Zeal?"

The figure nodded once before correcting him. "Here we are the Wall of Zealots." It was a subtle distinction in the old tongue, and one that carried a variety of meaning. The merchant sighed.

"The king has sent us to trade. The liason from the mountainhomes is among us and will be meeting with your leader shortly. Let us unload and get this over with."

The dwarf nodded and walked east of the depot a few paces and rapped his warhammer against the stone, signalling those below. Another dwarf came up and the merchant scowled. That one was well known to him. Led, the leader of the cultists. The merchant, looking now for the first time at the bins that had been brought up to trade was surprised. He'd half expected a poor assortment of cheap stone trinkets and mugs.

He hadn't expected to see such work as had been brought up. He looked at the bins and picked up a flute, made from the bone of a giant eagle. On the side was an image of a sun in turtle bone and it was banded down the length of it in turtle shell. Near the upper grip several small gems were inset into the bone, gold opal, fire agate and beryls. It was a splendid piece of work, and quite valuable, regardless of his personal preference for the instrument. In the bins were other assorted items of equal value, broaches, amulets, drums, even various small toys.

He'd not seen such work made mostly of bone and in spite of it all was impressed. His business sense took over then and he decided that here was an exploitable niche in the crafts market. Stone goods were common and in abundance everywhere, but most places simply used the bones to train marksdwarves. Bone crafts other than totems were simply not that ordinary. He smiled, a slick, cunning smile and went to shake Led's hand. Oh yes, the king could make them trade, but he could still take them for as much as he could.

In the end he was quite happy with what he'd obtained. He managed to haggle a considerable amount more than fair out of them when they'd made the original offer and it was obvious that their leader wasn't experience in matters of trade. He'd managed to net a nearly nine thousand ingot profit, mostly due to the fact that they'd had to go 'out of their way' and into 'dangerous terrain infested by evil'. The cultists had gotten useful things as well. Food and drink, some wood, a few blocks of overpriced and freakishly heavy platinum which he was glad to get rid of, several bags and barrels, an assortment of cages, one with a cat, another with a sheep, and some cast off from the soldiers, a steel chain shirt and high boots that had been replaced with High Steel forged by Aardvark himself.

The nobles might not be happy with what he'd done, but at least his superiors in the guild could have few true complaints. He'd made an inordinate amount of profit, and all good quality items, something lacking in their current market since so much had been abandoned or sold to come to this land.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 20, 2009, 01:23:26 pm**

21st of Hematite Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

We've received a group of immigrants today. I was guarding the entrance when they arrived and I was quite pleased to see a number of my old friends among them. Apparently Kolok came north with a group from Onol Lened and swung by Shellhelms looking for us. There he picked up a small group of cultists that were coming down as well. Ragnar is apparently still recovering, though in good spirits. Crush actually encouraged his niece, Boink to come. I swear I'll never understand that family and their naming systems. I'll have to ask if her siblings are all named Boink as well. Maybe it's a family joke.

Led was relieved as well as several of the devoted were able to make it without harm. Kolok helped in that regard, fending off a smilodon attack in the crystalline forests to the north-east of here. It seems he was able to trade much of his equipment to the humans south of us in exchange for one of their shamans to treat him for the spider bite and he is now suffering no ill effects from it, though his ghastly scar will forever remain on the back and side of his neck.

One of the devoted was familiar to Led as well and had been acting as supply master for the remaining until many of them left. He, too, has a funny name. Thesaurusaurus or some such thing. But he's a talented farmer and handy with a quill and vellum so he'll be relieving Led of most of the bookkeeping. With the caravan's trade we've got sufficient food to last us through the winter and the farms are at least functioning. Fre has decided that with a full time farmer present she can take up brewing and mostly cooking now.

And, personally, I'm glad to have received the steel chain shirt and boots. My pig tail shoes were showing signs of wear from the sharp rocks and it's nice to have a little more protection against the undead. Not that we've seen much of them top-side lately. Thankfully it's been quiet, though I did spot a zombie giant eagle to the north of us again. But only one isn't much of a problem.

((And here's the new additions, and Fre. I apologize for gender problems. We're short on male dwarves. I'd include more named characters but gender-switches don't really happen in DF, so I'll work everyone else in as best as I can. 5 of 16 dwarves are male. Rest are female.))

Spoiler (click to show/hide)

FPS: 99

'Fre' Kûbukônul, "'Fre' Lancemirror", Cook

'Fre' Kûbukônul has been quite content lately. She was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. She dined in a good dining room recently. She slept on a rough cave floor recently. She slept in the dirt recently. She has complained of hunger lately. She has complained of the lack of chairs lately. She has been accosted by terrible vermin. She has been annoyed by flies. She has complained of thirst lately. She has been satisfied at work lately. She is a worshipper of Urdim Silveryhelped the Bejeweled Tax. She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Wall of Zealots. 'Fre' Kûbukônul likes Rhyolite, Fine pewter, Pipe opal, Pine, floodgates and ponies for their small size. When possible, she prefers to consume Dwarven wine and Rock nuts. She absolutely detests rats. She prefers that others handle the leadership roles. She is rarely happy or enthusiastic. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She doesn't go out of her way to do more work than necessary. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She likes working outdoors and grumbles only mildly at inclement weather.

FPS: 100

Thesaurusaurus' Angenlôr, "'Thesaurusaurus' Fairtools", Cult Quartermaste

'Thesaurusaurus' Angenlôr has been happy lately. He talked with a child lately. He has been satisfied at work lately. He has two children: Led Lancedtrance and Mosus Smithfriends. He is a dubious worshipper of Mondûl. He is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. He is a member of The Wall of Zealots. He is the manager of The Wall of Zealots. He is the bookkeeper of The Wall of Zealots. 'Thesaurusaurus' Angenlôr likes Sandy clay, Celestrium, Yellow grossular, amber, Rope reed Fabric, waves and lizards for their beauty. When possible, he prefers to consume Dwarven rum. He is often nervous. He prefers that others handle the leadership roles. He is confident. He needs alcohol to get through the working day.

FPS: 99

'Kolok' Nunûroddom, "'Kolok' Crevicecloisters", Woodcutter

'Kolok' Nunûroddom has been quite content lately. He has complained of thirst lately. He slept in the grass recently. He dined in a very good dining room recently. He has been annoyed by flies. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He has been satisfied at work lately. He is a casual worshipper of Logem Earthencolors. He is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. He is a member of The Wall of Zealots. 'Kolok' Nunûroddom likes Andesite, Anurite, Fire agate, Mahogany, pearl, the color pale pink, large gems, menacing spikes, mules for their stubbornness and Hide root for their fuzzy projections. When possible, he prefers to consume Plump helmets. He absolutely detests lizards. He almost never feels discouraged. He is self-conscious. He prefers to be alone. He can't be bothered with frantic, fast-paced living. He appreciates art and natural beauty. He likes to try new things. He is willing to compromise with others. He is not easily moved to pity. He lacks confidence. He dislikes contracts and regulations. He strives for excellence. He is self-disciplined. He takes time when making decisions. He needs alcohol to get through the working day.

FPS: 99

'Boink' Zuntîrakmam, "'Boink' Anvilsinks", Jack-of-all-Trades

'Boink' Zuntîrakmam has been quite content lately. She had a pretty decent drink lately. She has complained of thirst lately. She slept on a rough cave floor recently. She dined in a very good dining room recently. She has been annoyed by flies. She has been satisfied at work lately. She was disgusted by a miasma lately. She is a worshipper of Urdim Silveryhelped the Bejeweled Tax. She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Wall of Zealots. 'Boink' Zuntîrakmam likes Native platinum, Steel, Lavendar jade, horn, Pig tail Fabric, the color burnt sienna, querns, large gems, Reciprocating battering rams and cows for their haunting moos. When possible, she prefers to consume rainbow trout and Longland beer. She is assertive. She is entirely averse to risk and excitement. She has a fertile imagination. She likes to try new things. She is not affected by the suffering of others. She needs alcohol to get through the working day. She does not mind being outdoors, at least for a time.

((Oh, and talk about bad luck. 1 Thresher (Kolok), 1 Milker, 1 Cheesemaker, 1 Potash maker, 1 Fisherdwarf, 1 Farmer (Thesaurusaurus), 1 Peasant (Boink) and two children (both male and children of Thesaurus, a single father). Strange with such a gender disparity to have three male dwarves in a single family without any females. I've never seen such a completely useless bunch of dwarves. Except the Farmer there is nothing remotely usable. Sigh. Figures the cult would get the refuse of society. lol.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **March 20, 2009, 03:21:36 pm**

((I'll make a perfectly fine everydwarf, thank you. Hell, in my current fort anyone who makes it past the fire imp forest fires is welcome to perform every damn labor I can give them. Out of 50 or so immigrants, 8 have survived the gauntlet, and 3 of my founders died to my super-orcs [tripled their damblock and doubled their size and melee attacks] so I have 11 dwarfs running a fort that I've had the leisure time to make into a metropolis fit for 200.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 20, 2009, 03:53:58 pm**

((Strangely I've noticed very little respawning of the vile creatures roaming the hills. Originally there was a group of zombie grave hounds, two groups of zombie mountain goats, two groups of zombie large demon rats and a group of zombie marmots, not to mention the swarms of swans and herons, which are apparently permanent and have begun having cygnets and chicks. I'm working on depopulating those now. But I've wiped out all the undead and only the occasional group will reappear now. I've seen a few zombie giant eagles, but not much other than that. Much to my displeasure. Perhaps once I eliminate the native populations of live creatures they'll come.

For a terrifying map I honestly expected worse. Which is why I bit the bullet and brought a steel warhammer and buckler with me with the starting gear. Still, it's only in the beginning so we'll see how things turn out. If I can get the population of the map down to just dwarves I'll be happy.))

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 23, 2009, 12:40:31 pm**

Umaferi, the tigerman thief lay silent hidden in the brush below the entrance to the known dwarven outpost. He'd been hiding in place observing the dwarves come and go for three days now and knew the best time to sneak in without having one come upon him unawares. And now was the time to make his move.

He loosed his silver dagger in it's sheath and licked his forearms to calm himself quickly. He could still taste the blood of the fowl he'd taken down to aliment himself with while he waited for a good time to move. Extending his claws to give him traction in the loose stone and dirt of the slope he made his silent entry. He could smell the scent of dwarves in the air, it permeated the area as he got closer to the entrance, the scent of it harsh and tangy to his nostrils. If he could make off with some reasonably valuable trinket and make it back he would be accepted into his tribe's pack of hunters and soldiers. A place of high standing. It was worth the risk.

He heard the footfalls of a dwarf and smelled the earthy smell of tree sap as he came closer. The thief ducked against the slope, flattening himself against the stone and waited.

Kolok passed by, carrying his axe and headed down to get to work on the trees at the bottom of the slope, unawares that he passed within a few lengths of the tigerman.

Umaferi grinned in spite of himself. The woodcutter! What luck. He would be busy below for some little time, surely and there were few others that came out of the entrance regularly. He made his way silently the last few lengths to the gap in the wall and paused before entering. The smell of undeath was on the air, but here in this accursed area that was normal. This smell was only slightly different but he thought nothing of it as he slipped inside.

It was only then that he realized that the other smell he had noticed was the smell of metal, of steel.

At first he took the thing in front of him to be an abomination, a creature of undeath but in the split second that remained him he realized his mistake. The glint of steel covered it's chest and it walked on two feet as only dwarves did here. He gave a low growl and bolted for the door but the dwarf was too fast. Catching him there the dwarf knocked him down to the ground with a blow from behind. As the tigerman turned to face his attacker, teeth bared the hammer-blow caught him in his chest and the force of it picked him bodily up, flinging him like a rag-doll into the stone mountain behind him. In the second that remained him he knew that he had failed and paid the ultimate price.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **March 23, 2009, 08:30:38 pm**

I like how you make a simple matter, such as pulping a tigerman, seem epic.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 24, 2009, 12:19:38 pm**

((Thanks Barbarossa, sometimes it's easy to write with the creative mood, others, not so much.))

Winter 08 Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

I feel like I've been standing guard here at the entrance for a long time now. Occasionally I take forays up topside to get a view of the landscape and see what lies around us. From the roof of the Depot I can see most everywhere around us. To the south, both south-east and south-west are flocks of waterfowl. To the north and east, only the barrenness of the Hungry Spines of Dung. I haven't spotted any undead roaming about for some time, something I find rather strange. I had expected there to be a greater profusion of them, to be honest.

Fre has requested a crossbow and bolts of Led. He went to inquire of the goddess regarding it, much to Fre's impatience. Heh. In the end it was agreed upon and she's been out hunting the abundant waterfowl in the area to help supplement our supplies. I think she just likes getting out of the fortress from time to time and there simply isn't enough for her to do in the kitchens yet.

Mondul has, through Led, set forth some guidelines regarding the use of weapons for the military. Death is sacred and a personal thing, therefore, crossbows as a military weapon are prohibited. Death from range does not allow the dwarf to properly see the passing and be able to witness the final moments. Hunters, as the goddess' personal servants, are excepted for this, as are soldiers when engaging flying enemies or creatures.

To commemorate Fre's elevation to elect of Mondul, despite her not being a believer, Led has used the bones of the recently deceased Tigerman to craft a set of armor for Fre. It seemed particularly fitting to him to use the bones of a sentient cat as the armor for a hunter, and the bones of a grave hound as the armor for a hunter of undead. Fre's set of tigerman leggings, gauntlets, and helm, along with her bow complete the set and with her continued efforts she'll eventually have them decorated with the bones of her kills.

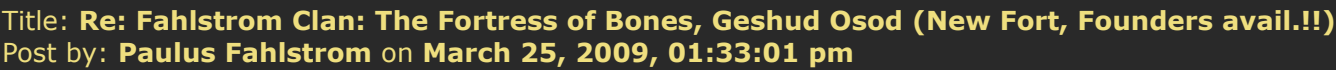
I'll be keeping watch from the hilltop, in case any undead stray too near while she is hunting. I've also requested the entrance be fortified somewhat further and now, three full strings of cage traps have been requested. It may take some time to get them finished. But since Mondul also does not approve of other forms of traps which administer death unwitnessed they will have to do.

Title: **Re: Fahlstrom Clan: The Fortress of Bones, Geshud Osod (New Fort, Founders avail.!!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 24, 2009, 06:49:43 pm**

Winter 08 Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

It seems that the Avarii have returned. They would not speak with us as before, but they have not acted aggressively towards us, either. They've brought pack animals and assorted goods as if to trade, yet for some reason refuse to unload their animals at the depot. Led considers their behavior highly suspicious as he's never had contact with these 'winged humans'. I have assured them that if they do not threaten us there is no reason to provoke them. I suspect that this group is not the same as the faction with which I spoke in Onol Lened.

More disturbingly is the effect the mountain range seems to have on them. After standing around Not Trading they simply up and left, their animals following them as best as possible. A lone Avarii merchant remained behind, refusing to leave and while I was looking over the area I noticed him, acting irrationally. It seemed that both he and his donkey went bezerk. Such an individual is highly unstable, regardless of race and I was forced to pay him a visit. And his little donkey too.



The friends gathered around the set of tables a floor down from the majority of the others in this new home of theirs. A half dozen kegs sat nearby, in various stages of empty, testament to dwarven thirst. Long into the night they sat and drank and talked of times long since past, bringing up past acquaintances, or amusing stories or embarrassing blunders. It was a time of refreshment, and a tradition among some of them.

For Boink it was new, an experience not mentioned by her uncle who had sent her here to make herself a new life. But she could look on the room with pride, she herself has smoothed the stone of much of it. Fre sat across from her, relaxing with a mug of strawberry wine, crossbow sitting on the table in front of her, blood spatters coating her bone armor and helmet now dried into a dark reddish stain. Kolok too sat, slightly apart from the others, his great axe resting against his chair. Paulus was the final one, his helmet removed and sitting on the table in front of him, canine fangs hovering in the air like a hungry creature.

"Ah, decent enough brew. And good biscuits Fre."

She nodded. "Aye, swan tallow and strawberry seed, I know how ye like them."

The talk was light-hearted and there'd been little enough of true trouble, unexpectedly enough.

Kolok looked over at Paulus, who was glancing at a section of vellum, numbers written on it.

"Wha'zzat? Designs?"

"Nay, just the numbers for the past year. Have a look see if'n ye want. Led had Thesaurusaurus draft up a copy for me too."

He handed the sheet to Kolok who passed it to others when he was done.

"Speakin' of, how's he working out for you Fre? He keep the farms running well enough?"

She nodded slightly as she finished her drink.

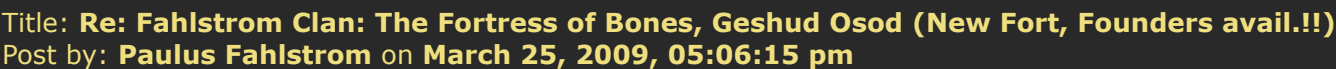
"Oh, aye. Might could be a bit prompter in the fields but works out well enough. Leaves the brewing and cooking to me, still, I'm busy enough I dare say."

"Mmmmk. I'll see if we can spare another one or two in the future to stabilize the food production. I'll let you handle it all if you don't mind."

"Nah, I'll make sure it runs fine."

"Good, good. If ya need anything let me know."

The chatter continued for many hours, the friends celebrating the turn of the year quietly.



17th of Granite

The elves have arrived but we've refused to trade with them. After our experiences beneath Onol Lened I doubt I'll be able to look at an elf again without reaching for my weapon.

I think Fre feels the same way. She came upon one of the pointy eared savages as she was heading out for the hunt. I saw her raise her

crossbow almost instinctively but jerked high at the last second, realizing her mistake and sending the bolt off into the sky, pretending she was aiming for a heron.

The elves looked rather paranoid after that near-miss.

Another sight from the cliff warmed my heart as the wind up here never could. A small group of migrants coming from the south across the frozen swamp. The unmistakable gait of Ragnar in the lead, crunching boldly across the frozen terrain. As they got closer I recognized others. Pete and Oddbodd apparently among them. It looked like they'd been travelling for some time and I could only assume they'd come from Onol Lened itself. I recognized the strange farmer Der Kartoffel as they got closer and a few others from the mountainhome.

The brewer and Der Kartoffel I've asked to report to Fre. Ragnar will likely help with the mining now that Led is too busy. I was surprised to see Pete without Crush but after speaking with her she said that she was feeling too 'pressured' and needed more personal time. That I can understand. Ragnar and Oddbodd too seem more distant, but they still seem at ease with one another as though they've come to the decision to remain friends. I suspect it's mostly just Oddbodd's nature.

The only other immigrant was a stonemason who I wasn't aware of while at Onol. I told him we had little need of a mediocre stonemason but that he was welcome to take up some sewing, weaving and leatherworking whenever he wanted to. Those we had need of as the avarii donkey had several bins of rope reed cloth. Not to mention the cloth we'd acquired from the dwarves last year.

((Ok, Der Kartoffel, Ragnar, Oddbodd and Pete are in. And our population is at 24 so we might not get any more for a little while. We'll see. I've begun an extermination campaign on the permanent wildlife to help reduce the FPS. And guess what...

1. Hunters won't go out and hunt if all the animals are in the air. Yup, if all the herons and swans are in flight, no hunter will go out to hunt, even if they have a crossbow. I've had to draft Fre and have her shoot down annoying wildlife en masse because of it.
2. Once some of the persistent wildlife got killed, and all the children they were having too, I started getting roaming groups of creatures again. Slugmen, otters, more swans and herons of course, but also undead. Mostly zombie goats and the occasional zombie giant eagle. So there must be a limit as to how many creatures can be on the roaming map and persistent wildlife counts towards that number.

Oh, and some of the personalities are awesome. Oddbodd is particularly amusing. Profile's below in spoiler. I've assumed you're all Clan Loyalists unless you want to tell me otherwise. Oddbodd and Pete are technically outsiders, but have already been integrated.))
[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)

FPS: 100

'Der Kartoffel' Gusgashtulon, "'Der Kartoffel' Stokerroad", Farmer

'Der Kartoffel' Gusgashtulon has been quite content lately. He dined in a very good dining room recently. He had a truly decadent drink lately. He slept without a proper room recently. He was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. He has complained of hunger lately. He has been annoyed by flies. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He has complained of thirst lately.
He is a worshipper of Logem Earthencolors.
He is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. He is a member of The Wall of Zealots.
'Der Kartoffel' Gusgashtulon likes Native silver, Sterling silver, Precious fire opal, earrings and horses for their strength. When possible, he prefers to consume Dwarven wine and Dwarven syrup.
He is self-conscious. He doesn't often experience strong cravings or urges. He tends to avoid crowds. He is candid and sincere in dealings with others. He is disorganized. He needs alcohol to get through the working day.

FPS: 53

'Pete' Usânèzum, "'Pete' Murderedhames", Metalsmith

'Pete' Usânèzum has been happy lately. She had a fine drink lately. She admired a fine Seat lately. She slept without a proper room recently. She dined in a very good dining room recently. She has been annoyed by flies. She was comforted by a wonderful creature in a cage recently. She was disgusted by a miasma lately. She has complained of thirst lately.
She is a dubious worshipper of Etur.
She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Wall of Zealots.
'Pete' Usânèzum likes Cassiterite, Selenesite, Dendritic agate, Palm, horn, Pig tail Fabric, bolts, catapult parts, ponies for their small size and one-humped camels for their hump. When possible, she prefers to consume Sewer brew. She absolutely detests fire snakes.
She has a calm demeanor. She considers spending time alone much more important than associating with others. She lives life at a leisurely pace. She loves a good thrill. She has a good awareness of her own emotions. She is candid and sincere in dealings with others. She rarely completes tasks and is often overcome by distractions. She is extremely cautious. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.

FPS: 99

'Oddbodd' Mersethmistêm, "'Oddbodd' Luckportals", Mechanic

'Oddbodd' Mersethmistêm has been quite content lately. He dined in a very good dining room recently. He slept without a proper room recently. He had a truly decadent drink lately. He was disgusted by a miasma lately. He has been annoyed by flies. He has been satisfied at work lately. He has complained of thirst lately.
He is a worshipper of Logem Earthencolors.
He is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. He is a member of The Wall of Zealots.
'Oddbodd' Mersethmistêm likes Silty clay loam, Ferronite, Plume agate, dog leather, the color brass, diamonds, bolts and low boots. When possible, he prefers to consume Dwarven beer. He absolutely detests lizards.
He does not actively seek friendships and is incredibly distant and reserved. He enjoys being in crowds. He is assertive. He doesn't need thrills or risks in life. He is rarely happy or enthusiastic. He doesn't like to compromise with others. He is self-disciplined. He needs alcohol to get through the working day.

FPS: 100

'Ragnar' Ngotûnîton, "'Ragnar' Culthall", Axedwarf

'Ragnar' Ngotûnîton has been unhappy lately. She admired a fine Table lately. She dined in a very good dining room recently. She slept without a proper room recently. She has complained about the draft lately. She has been accosted by terrible vermin. She has been satisfied at work lately. She has complained of thirst lately. She was disgusted by a miasma lately.
She is a worshipper of Asën the Glowing Iron of Brands.
She is a citizen of The Washed Constructs. She is a member of The Wall of Zealots.
'Ragnar' Ngotûnîton likes Celestrium, Nickel, Star ruby, amber and hatch covers. When possible, she prefers to consume Dwarven beer. She absolutely detests flies.
She can handle stress. She is very friendly. She is relaxed. She is not a risk-taker. She isn't given to flights of fancy. She is slow to trust others. She possesses great willpower. She needs alcohol to get through the working day.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **March 25, 2009, 08:31:18 pm**

can I see thesaurusaurus's profile? ;D

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Glacies** on **March 26, 2009, 02:19:55 am**

Glacies
Lawfull good.

Aspires to live in a cave covered in ice, with some sort of nasty pet in a pit. Preferably he'll have an indoor pool of water that looks natural, a little room for booze and strawberries, and a bedroom. Have the chap train in sword use with a masterwork obsidian sword, if possible. Worships a god related to cold if at all possible, and withering and blight. Maybe the god of death, but in his own, special way. The dwarf is not a bully, and believes in honor, justice and chivalry. He just really, really doesn't like people. Make him lurk in his cave except when he's needed to defend the fort. Keep him busy hunting before he has his cave to hide in.

If you keep tempatures off, all you have to do is channel out some of the ponds. If you turn tempatures on for a bit, if the river melts in summer you can get a renewable source of ice when it refills.

Worships a god related to cold if at all possible, and withering and blight. Maybe the god of death, but in his own, special way. The dwarf is not a bully, and believes in honor, justice and chivalry. He just really, really doesn't like people. Talks with a refined sounding British accent, rather than a Scottish one.

I think this would make an awesome place to explore in adventure mode, and you could put his sword in a lead bin in his room or tomb as treasure.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 26, 2009, 05:13:32 pm**

((Barbarossa your profile is under the spoiler profiles of reply #468 on this page. Seems you'd make a great second in command for Led to me.

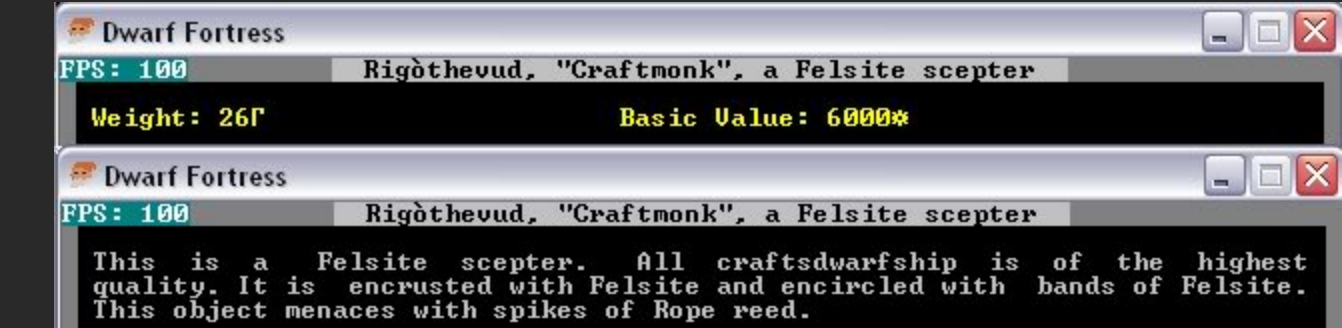
Glacies, welcome aboard. I'm sure I can accomodate you as long as you don't mind being female. In fact, I've got just the person picked out for you.

And yes, one of my focuses for the entire design is to make this a fun ~~deathtrap~~ place to explore for adventurers.))

Late Spring 08 Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

Apparently our stonecarver took offense at my suggestion we didn't need any shoddy stone crafts and that he was free to engage in other crafting pursuits. To prove me wrong he's made a singularly exceptional artifact. Not worth a whole lot as all he used was Felsite and some Rope reed cloth, but still, it's an amazing display of his talent.

I asked him if he could put out more stone crafts like it and he felt that though not quite as good he could now easily make exceptional crafts. He's been given permission to do so.



((Just my luck. I was trying to avoid the mass amount of stonecrafts that I've always had done in order to branch out into other crafts and this guy goes and becomes legendary. *sighs*))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **March 26, 2009, 10:29:41 pm**

hehe, my guy is both nervous and confident.

wait a sec... indecision and a preference to follow makes for a good second in command?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Glacies** on **March 27, 2009, 08:43:05 am**

Female dwarf's fine. Just make sure she doesn't carry her offspring, if any, into battle with her.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 27, 2009, 12:47:41 pm**

((Sure Barbarossa. If you worship a goddess of death how do you think you get promoted if all the spots above you are filled? It means Led doesn't worry about him having to try and take over or subvert the cult.

No problem Glacies. As she's not married, nor has any lovers I don't think it'll be a problem any time soon. Probably. To be honest, I've never, ever, had a couple get married in any of my forts.))

Summer 09 Journal of Led, High Priest

The warmer seasons are upon us again, as evidenced by the increase in thieves paying us a visit. Paulus has been standing guard at the entrance and has driven all unwanted visitors off. He even ran down the only goblin that came, finally catching up with it below in the swamp as it sought for a quick path through the mires. I've made a crossbow from it's remains for him to help Fre with and the pair have been hunting the game in the area with a zealous energy.

Thesaurusaurus seems to be doing fine in his position, and has been alternating between updating our cult's records and picking our underground crops. I was a little concerned that he and Paulus would clash over the latter's tendency to organize things as he sees best, but it hasn't been that much of an issue, thankfully. T's (his name is too long to continually spell while I write) children have been somewhat unhappy here lately and we've taken a few steps to cheer them up, allowing them to have their own designated bunks. They're unaccustomed to the hardships of life and losing their mother to the plagues that swept through the old cities wasn't easy. It was this loss that brought them to us though, and as such I can only praise Mondul that, in her wisdom, she both accomplishes her role as goddess and sees to her servant's needs at the same time.

I have no doubt that with proper instruction T's children will grow up to be devout followers.

Both the humans and Avarii have arrived to trade again. Or perhaps I should just include the humans. The winged ones are ... strange and unwordly, and frankly, disturbing. The mountains themselves seem to exert some sort of unnatural effect upon them and another went bezerk as they were leaving.

Trade with the humans was, as always, profitable. We were able to get basically everything we wanted from them, what with the supplies the thieves have been bringing to augment our own trade goods. I've not needed to waste bone on mundane tasks like trade goods and we are continuing to expand our home to fit our needs.

After the humans left we removed the Depot from the peak and set it up in the newly excavated cavern at the base of the peak. It's much closer to our living areas and craftshall and should, according to Paulus, minimize the travel distances, while still remaining fortifiable.

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on March 31, 2009, 05:35:29 pm

Autumn 08 Journal of Led, High Priest

The dwarven traders have arrived again. They claimed that they didn't see our Depot on the peak any more and so assumed that we'd been overwhelmed by undead. But some of the independant merchants that tag along with the wagons came by and were treated to our hospitality, such as it is.

In honesty, the Depot has now been completely moved underground, something I hope will be made known now and we'll eliminate such unpleasantness in the future. I suspect that the merchants simply didn't want to come and used that as an excuse.

((In reality I forgot to widen the entrance tunnel to accomodate for wagons, after moving the Depot below.))

In any case they brought some useful supplies and we traded away many of our stonegoods and equipment obtained from the thieves that come. There seemed to be an unusual amount of large red-backed tarantula silk clothing. It's quite pretty and I can understand why it's sought after. Almost all the workshops have now been installed into the craftshall, south of the central chamber. But there is always so much to do that little crafting seems to be getting done at the moment.

Paulus and Fre continue to hunt and supplement our plants and salted meat with fresh food. And work continues well, though I'm eager to begin construction on the vaunted monument to Mondul that Paulus keeps referring to. He doesn't want to begin construction until we have sufficient material and he's asking for an vast amount of blocks to be made.

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)
Post by: Frelock on March 31, 2009, 07:02:42 pm

((Good to see you back, I was starting to get worried.

This monument, you will post screen shots right, perhaps with 3D Dwarf Visualizer?))

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on April 01, 2009, 01:41:47 pm

((Yeah, sorry about the longer-than-normal delay. School started up again and it's kept me busy for the last few days. And I definitely plan on using Dwarf 3D for a picture of it when it's finished. I fear it may take some time though. And I don't know how to use the program, but that'll come once I've got something to model.))

Mid-summer 8, Journal of Led, High Priest

A perplexing circumstance has arisen to make me question our stance regarding injuries. A goblin thief, while attempting to enter our fortress ran into one of the faithful and in the ensuing pile of dwarf and goblin one of our followers was injured before the goblin fled the scene. He's currently resting in a bed in the barracks and we've had some buckets made to fetch water, but none dare approach the underground lake that is our source of water. The resident undead there are unpredictable.

Fre herself went to fetch some water and upon seeing the thrashing zombie in the pool unloaded her entire quiver into the creature to no affect. Daunted she too returned without water.

My quandry is, since we are worshippers of Mondul, do we nurse our fellow back to health if possible or do we consign her to her eventual fate early. I've prayed for guidance and the goddess has comforted me regarding this concern. She is patient goddess and allows us our time while alive, knowing that in the end she will come to claim us.

I've asked Paulus and Ragnar to come up with a plan and they've drawn up some ideas to try. It will involve a little mining, and the construction of a well, eventually, but is possible and might allow us to save our fellow sister in the faith before she perishes of dehydration. Only time will tell.

((I've now got three buckets stuck near the edge of the lake. No one can pick them up without seeing the dead and dropping them again. Sigh. Pansies.))

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on April 02, 2009, 04:28:15 pm

Fre's eyes surveyed the far peak across the way from her vantage point on the level ground where the old depot once stood. Several blocks still lay scattered about, two of them of pure platinum, but so heavy no thief would dare take it lest he be run down. They made a good sized mound from which to scan for animals to hunt for but today she was looking at something else. She called down below and soon Paulus joined her up above.

"What is is? A new flock of herons fly in?"

"No, something strange. Over there just south of the peak."

"Where..."

"There, did you see the movement?"

"Aye, looks like a pack of undead mountain goats."

"Aye, indeed. But where are they headed?"

The pair watched on as the four goats seemed to be drawn inexhorably north towards something. Perhaps something living.

And as if they had materialized out of air the goats were set upon by the ambushers. Mandibles clicking audibly in the late autumn air the six insectoid ambushers wreaked havoc upon the goats, tearing them to shreds in seconds.

"That's a problem."

"Mmhmmm. Fancy taking on that lot?"

"Not a chance. I've seen them fight up close before. You remember the siege back in Onol Lened. It was three on fifteen, sure, but we had steel then. High steel too, and full sets of plate."

"We'll need to prepare better then. That could have just as easily been one of us."

Paulus was silent for a few seconds as the pair headed off to the south to hunt waterfowl.

"I know. Let's hope they aren't here for us then."

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 03, 2009, 01:51:21 pm**

The insight came to her in a dream. Her goddess, Mondul, spoke to her in whispers throughout it and in it she was a servant of death. A blade-wielding hurricane of metal and herald of their order.

She was a vessel.

In her vision the ice and snow covered mountains were surrounded by dwarven persistence and ingenuity. The chill wind cut through the peak and whipped across their walls, only dim outlines in her sight. It was the peak that was the entrance to their home that drew her gaze. She couldn't imagine a better symbol for what they stood for and yet, inwardly, she knew it hadn't come to pass.

Yet.

Was a vessel.

In a flash of insight she knew then that she would be one of the fortunate to help construct that monument to their goddess. The architect had already been chosen, plans were already being made. It remained then begin work. Her goddess had chosen her to personify an aspect of worship, and the cold no longer chilled her, but comforted her in it's frigid embrace.

A vessel.

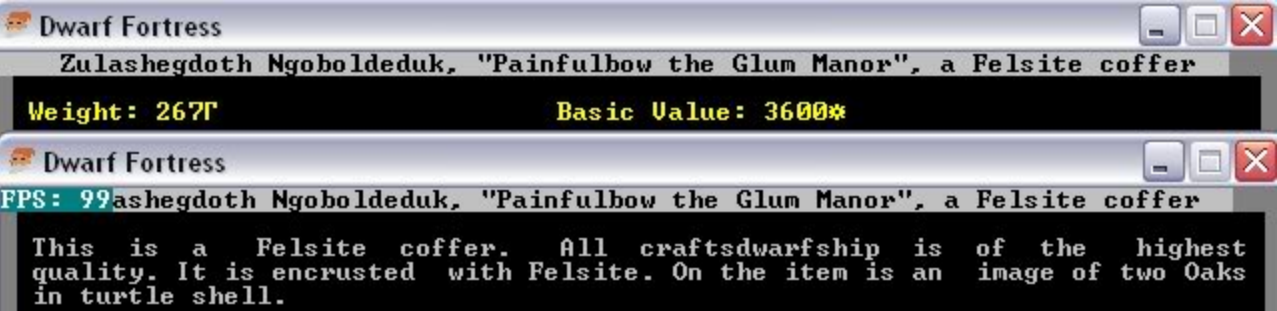
Her name would change. Would become a sign for what she believed.

It was then that she awoke, lying in the common barracks that she so despised. The lack of privacy was repugnant to her but at the moment she remembered still the faintest of whispers from her dream. She rushed out towards a workshop, claiming it as hers while she constructed her task. A single block of felsite and a turtle shell would be sufficient, but worked so cunningly it seemed as if they blended into each other. The hinges were hidden and worked effortlessly.

She finished her creation in a surprisingly short time and in a sudden flash of insight knew what she'd been doing wrong with the stone previously. She could feel, now, how the stones went together, how they acted in concert.

She gave a silent utterance to thank her goddess and dedicated her newest creation to her who carried them all into the next life. Before her stood her creation.

A vessel.



She would have to go see Led about her vision. And show him what Mondul had seen fit to show to her. He of all people would understand. Him and the Architect.

And she would have to tell him her new name. The name that symbolized the coldness of death.

Glacies.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **April 03, 2009, 02:27:10 pm**

Egad!
That's actually quite a cool artifact, despite the simplicity and price.

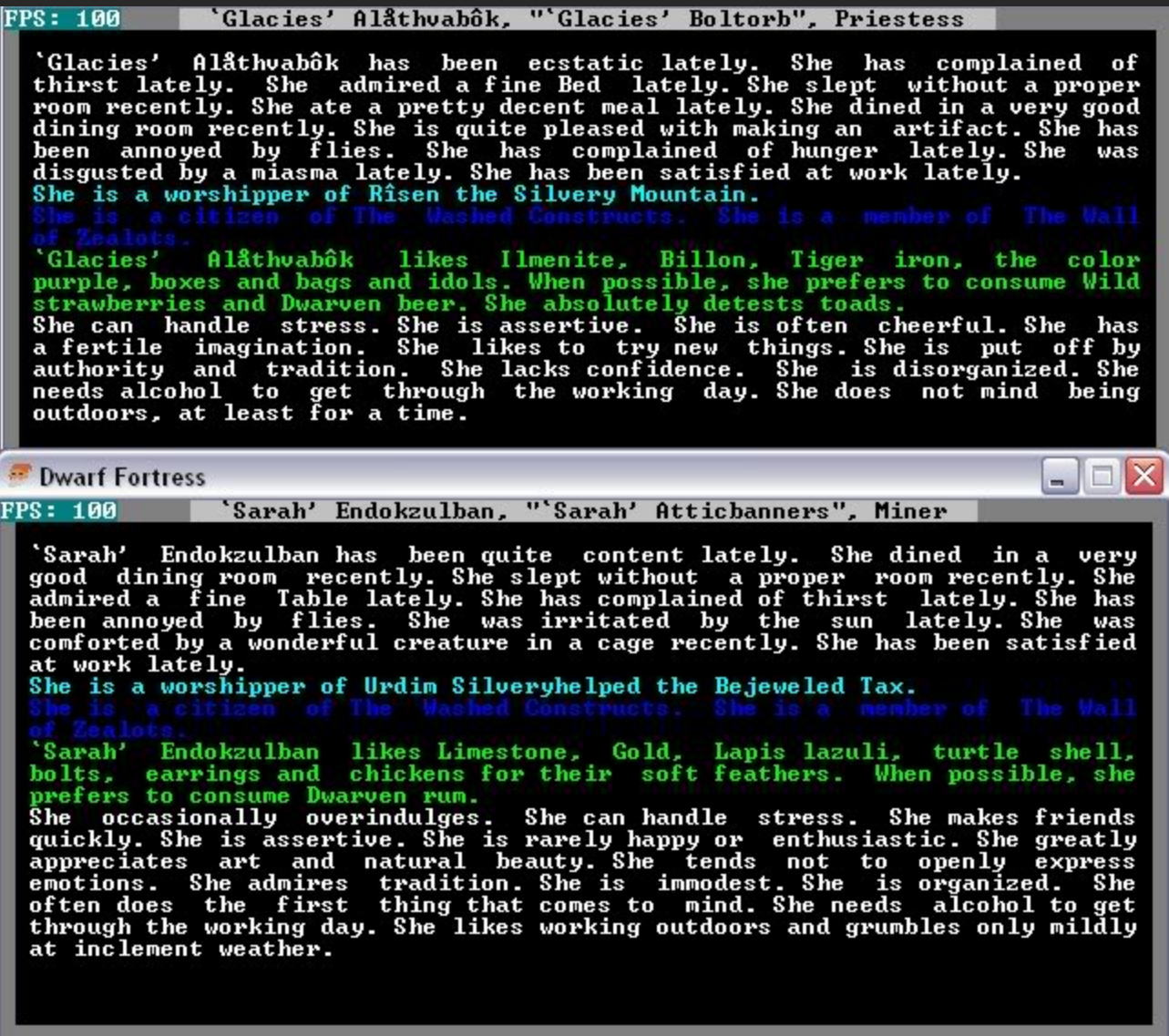
Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **archivis** on **April 04, 2009, 07:46:39 pm**

I'd like to request a dwarf - Sarah, a female dwarf. A miner who longs to delve deep into the mysteries of the depths of stone and death. Enjoys fishing and farming as stress relief, as she isn't very social with things that can talk back.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 06, 2009, 01:45:29 pm**

((You're in Archivis. Or rather Sarah is. I've give you one of the founders, the metalcrafter. She's been doing mining most of the time already and I'll work you into the story here in a bit. I'm afraid I've been a bit busy so I've not been able to post as consistently as before, but I'll do what I can to remedy that situation.

Here's the profiles for the two recent additions.))



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Glacies** on **April 07, 2009, 12:05:32 pm**

You know what? You're an awesome writer. :D

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **April 07, 2009, 08:11:23 pm**

Quote from: Glacies on April 07, 2009, 12:05:32 pm
You know what? You're an awesome writer. :D

agreed.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **archivis** on **April 07, 2009, 08:54:46 pm**

(Yay! Take your time, your work is worth the wait :))

Quote from: Paulus Fahlstrom on April 06, 2009, 01:45:29 pm
((You're in Archivis. Or rather Sarah is. I've give you one of the founders, the metalcrafter. She's been doing mining most of the time already and I'll work you into the story here in a bit. I'm afraid I've been a bit busy so I've not been able to post as consistently as before, but I'll do what I can to remedy that situation.

Here's the profiles for the two recent additions.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 08, 2009, 02:24:00 pm**

Early Winter, 08

Cerol grumbled a bit as she looked at the blank orthoclase wall at the foot of the stairs. It's not that she was truly unhappy, but with all the effort being put forth on the construction of their home she would have expected a little more detail to be put into personal housing for each of them. The dining room up near the farms was adequate, but only barely so and seemed more crowded each day as the temperatures dropped.

This commonality simply wasn't the way she'd grown up. It wasn't the way things should be done, at least in dwarven fashion. But she'd kept her opinions to herself. Led had enough things to worry about, what with rumors of enemies lurking and patrols of insectoids having been spotted above.

She spat on the ground before her.

And Led had insisted that they install a specific workshop at the base of the stairs for him to work on 'glories' to Mondul. She hefted her pick and dug in. Despite her personal depravations, she did feel that they could all use more of the 'glory' aspect in their home. There was still so much unfinished that grated on the eyes and nerves.

Her pick struck rock and she began carving the entrance.

Not far in, much to her surprise her pick broke through the rock into a pocket of air and as she pulled it back out the wall in front of her crumbled into the rough stone floor of a smallish cave. The stale, putrid air of it washed over her but she paid it no thought as, curiosity overcoming common sense, she walked forward along the line she'd intended to mine to see what was there. Several paces in front and to the north the small cavern ended abruptly, dropping off on three sides into blackness. Only the roof remained within view, stalactites dripping moisture into the chasm below.

Behind her and around a corner the hulking beast raised it's awkward head, gazing out of white filmed-over eyes through it's cloud of stench and decay. It could sense the change in the air, though not through ordinary means and the presence of living flesh nearby sent it shambling on it's way. Had it been alive it might have been overjoyed to see a smallish dwarf dropping a rock into the chasm that had been it's home in life. Dwarves were once one of it's favorite meals. But such things no longer mattered now. It was life itself that it longed to feast upon and it slowly advanced.

A sound behind her alerted her to movement and turning, she could tell in an instant that it was no natural creature. It was one of the abomination, one of the anathema of Mondul. A cry escaped her lips as the creature cut off her escape back down the very tunnel she'd

just made. She looked around at the smallish cave for anywhere she could hide where it could not reach and found nothing. Nothing but the chasm itself.

It advanced slowly, almost cautiously, and Cerol tripped as she backed up and the thing before her let out a howl. That noise snapped her out of her stupor and she shouted out.

"Help! Troll!"

Her voice was no longer panicked and driven into a corner she grabbed her pick tightly to herself, thinking the tool a meager choice of a weapon to face down an undead troll but as the thing advanced she caught the flash of silver or steel from the tunnel and knew she was not alone. The pair struck at the same time, her with her pick from the front and the Hound of Mondul from behind, his mighty warhammer crashing into flesh and breaking bone. Her pick seemed ineffectual indeed but that distraction seemed enough. She dodged an awkward blow from the zombie as her rescuer struck a mighty blow to the side of the beast, sending it flying into the cave wall where she'd tripped moments before. It struck the wall with force and disintegrated into various parts, the foul magicks no longer holding it together against it's will.

Paulus nodded at her as she came to stood next to him.

"Thank you."

He simply nodded once and awkwardly commented, "You're welcome, ... uh ... "

She turned to him. They had after all never been formally introduced. She didn't even know his full clan name. Everyone simply called him 'The Hound of Mondul' or the Hound for short.

"Cerol, but my friends call me Sarah."

"Sarah, nice name."

"And you?"

"You can just call me the Hound. It's simpler that way."

With that comment he walked back the way he'd come, stalking off quickly to speak with Led, doubtless about her discovery. She glanced back towards the chasm as he left. He obviously didn't make friends easily. Walking over to it again she peered into the darkness and called out.

"Oi!"

The sound echoed back from the walls for a long, long time. Accompanied by the unnatural shrieks of undead cave swallowmen. Whatever it was, the chasm had one true descriptor. It was vast.

Absolutely vast.



((There's an updated survey map with chasm included now that I've found it. When I say vast I'm not kidding. And chock full of undead. No wonder my FPS was slow. I'll be spending years (in game) working on cleansing it.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **April 08, 2009, 03:57:28 pm**

(I had a chasm cut around (literally) all sides of the map except a side that faced towards the sea. Wish I still had that seed so I could play the full map. It had magma too :(:'(:'(..))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 11, 2009, 11:45:13 am**

Mid-winter 09

Fre rubbed her hands together as she stepped through the gap in the wall and into the comparatively warm entrance hall. She could still see her breath in the chill air. She made her way past the traps, now long since ingrained into her memory. Just past the entrance she met Paulus.

"Oi, I've been keeping an eye on those insectoids out there. Now might be the time to strike."

He raised an eyebrow and merely nodded for her to continue. This continual sentry duty was beginning to wear on him. There were enemies enough for watch to be kept but since they had precious little armor for others. A little action would be welcome after the weeks of relative inactivity.

"What makes you say so?"

"The patrol has been near the other peak for months now. It's almost like they're surveyeing the area."

"That's bad."

"Aye. Don't want a nest of them here."

"Mmhmm."

"And they've begun to spread out some. In fact one of them seems to have taken up a position hovering in the air. He'd be easy prey for us to pick off I think."

"Sounds reasonable. They might not miss him until we've had time to clear out."

"Aye. Pick 'em off one at a time I say."

Paulus grinned, his helmet giving it an uncannily feral look.

"Let's get ready to go then."

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 13, 2009, 02:09:12 pm**

Four eyes peered out from behind the snow covered boulder to the north-east of the opening in the peak which led to the halls of the dwarves. Little other than the bleached skulls which adorned their heads could be visible as they silently watched the insectoid patrol. One of them hovered near the edge of the upper shelf upon which they hid, the others appeared to be working on something nearly fifty feet away, in a loose cluster. And even one of those appeared to have moved off to one side, for whatever reason.

The cold appeared to have made them lethargic but it was likely only an energy conservation habit on their part rather than by coincidence of environment. Their homelands were warm and dry and arid and they were simply unaccustomed to such temperature extremes.

Quietly the pair of dwarves advanced through the snow and ice, leaving little evidence of their passing on the hard surfaces, except where the dry powdery snow had collected into small pools. Fre double checked her leather quiver, smiling. These were undoubtedly the best bolts of theirs and had been decorated somewhat for trade. Led might not be happy with her using them but he couldn't complain too much. Had they not been intended for use he should have put them elsewhere than the bins of ammo. They were superior bolts, and much better than the swan and heron bolts she normally used for hunting, but they were still bone and she would have preferred steel, or even aestrium or whatever Pete had called the metal.

Before her Paulus advanced, hammer gripped loosely in one hand, buckler in the other. They'd gotten within twenty feet when the creature spotted them, rapidly flying their way in a burst of speed, chittering the whole while. It's many legs provided it balance and a slight humming filled the air as it's wings rapidly beat. A quiet -schick- could be heard and she grimly fitted a bolt to her crossbow as the creatures chitinous blade-like exo-skeleton extended on many of it's arms. She squeezed off a pair of bolts before the two closed and the first bounced off the creature's hard carapace. The second struck it in the leg, breaking through but not penetrating deeply before it stopped. Fre swore lightly under her breath. She needed real metal for her bolts.

The insectoid hovered lightly above the ground, attempting to use it's superior mobility against the dwarf but Paulus stoically held his ground, not letting the insectoid around him without exposing one of it's sides. He had to dodge twice as the blade-like claws nearly took him in the arm but on the second time he landed a solid blow to the creature's head, knocking it out of the air and stunning it momentarily. A pounce and blow crumpled one of it's wings into the frozen soil but as the creature rose one of the blades slid past his guard slicing into his knee from the side and slightly behind. The cut was clean and hurt only a little but Paulus' leg nearly buckled as he went down on the other knee.

It was Fre's shooting that prevented the insectoid from capitalizing on it's success, a bolt flying in to strike it on the shoulder as it stood. Another one flicked in, bouncing of the creature's chest carapace, and then another taking it through the hand. The air was filled with the swift clack of bolts as Fre drove the creature back from Paulus, stunning it again with a bolt to the head that did little damage but left the creature dazed. Another lucky shot struck the creature in the arm, breaking one of the vicious blades and lodging in the carapace beneath.

But for all her success in hitting she was doind precious little damage and her quiver, once full, was already beginning to feel remarkably empty. It was only after she again sunk a bolt into one of it's many arms and the insectoid fell, yet again that Paulus managed to stand and with the force of a falling anvil crushed a hole in the inert creature's chest.

Quietly Fre slipped her arm underneath Paulus' and she helped him limp back to cover. The remainder of the patrol hadn't yet noticed the absence but undoubtedly they would soon and the pair now knew they would be completely overmatched against so many with inferior equipment. Blood covered Paulus' leg as they made their way back but by the time they entered the stone halls that marked their territory he was able to walk well enough on his own.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **April 13, 2009, 09:13:06 pm**

((hmm... yellow or brown wound?))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 14, 2009, 12:57:50 pm**

((Strangely enough it was a bright yellow wound, but to the knee, so surprisingly it healed quickly. Apparently wounds to minor body parts can do that during non-season changes. So if you're stomach gets a yellow wound you don't have to have bed-rest necessarily.))

Late Winter 09

Kolok returned from his work, tired and weary. The cold of winter seemed so familiar to him again by now that the endless heat of Onol Lened was more like a distant memory in his many years of bitter cold. He stamped his feet on the hard alunite floor of the entryway, knocking off snow and ice that clung to his low leather boots. Heading down the stairs he admired the way the gradually increasing warmth matched the changing colors of stone as he approached his home.

There would be food waiting for him, hot if he wanted it, and drink as well, but he wanted neither at the moment. Ever since this morning his mind had been fixated on an idea, rapidly growing to consume his thoughts. The cult. The cultists worship of death still perplexed him some, and he hadn't taken the time to ask what it was they believed. That they abhorred undeath he knew. He'd spoken with Paulus about it as they passed the time outside or chatted while Paulus was on guard duty at the entrance. Kolok had an axe, a weapon of his own, but in these wilds it was easy to be outmatched when you wore no armor, and having Paulus within shouting distance was reassurance that should he spot undead he would have help cutting them down.

It seemed though that everyone here was fixated with death and somehow, that didn't seem proper to him, for dwarves that were alive and living to be so... morbid. His own worship had suffered but the idea that revolved in his mind might help persuade others to focus on life and living just a little more. At least enough to carve him his own room.

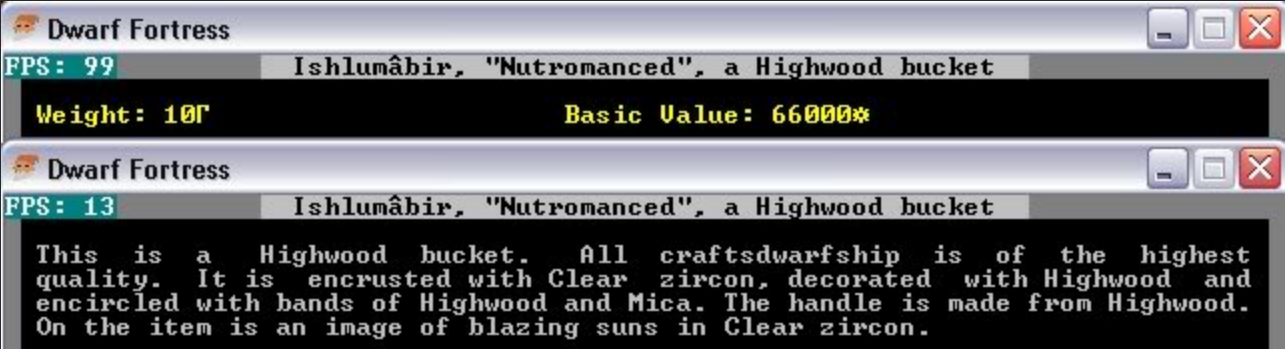
Ignoring the beckoning bed and slumber he wanted he headed instead to the carpenters workshop he sometimes used. Ragnar still dabbled here too and one of the cultists when bed, bins or barrels were needed. But it was time for him to work. It was time to turn the tide on the necromongers.

Carefully he gathered his materials, selecting the finest of highwood logs and bringing them to the workshop. Only the heartwood of the tree would be good enough, though how he knew that was beyond him. His aspect was as one gone fey as he gathered the material he needed. Rough clear zircon, as well as cut and a large block of unsmoothed mica, flecks glinting on the grey surface.

He didn't know how long it took him, days passed before his finest work was finished. And a much needed creation it was. The others had been lost to the undead of the underground lake. It was then he realized how tired he was and he headed straight to bed, in utter

exhaustion, leaving behind the artifact that would provide life to those living.

Ishlumabir, called Nutromanced, a highwood bucket.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **April 14, 2009, 09:01:38 pm**

Wow, that name sounds a lot like neutral-mance. NOT dead people magic!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **April 15, 2009, 08:14:21 am**

Holy hell, that's a huge chasm!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 16, 2009, 02:03:12 pm**

Mid-winter 09

Ragnar tramped out the stairs and headed towards the grim figure standing nearly immobile near the entrance. Taking up a position next to him she grunted and spat on the cold floor, breath steaming in the cold morning air.

"Bah. De cursed crack has more undead den forest has trees. None'll go near de edge ta do work and I kinnae get anyone ta make da bridge across ta clear 'em."

"I was afraid that might be a problem. Suggestions?"

"I've taken de liberty ta dig a shaft down from the troll-cave and came out on a small ledge some ways below. I kinnae see many undead from my side of the crack so it should be a good place ta cross. Lots o' flyin' carcasses around there though."

"I'll take up position there for a while, see if I can lure any close."

Ragnar nodded, solemnly.

"Best o' luck to ye den. The air down there is thick and foul. Deeper I'd not risk for fear o' stagnation."

"Go ahead and begin scoping out locations where the undead reside in the cliffs and back tunnel to them. I'l like our entrace to any nests to be as close to the cliff as possible so we can fight with the crack at our backs."

She raised an eyebrow slightly.

"At our backs? Why not drive the vermin off the cliff?"

"I considered it, but with the miasma and darkness I'd prefer we not accidentally stumble off. If we start near there we just have to go forward through the undead till we hit a wall."

Ragnar shrugged and nodded.

"I'll see it dun. Still, I wish we had some proper quarters."

"Aye, I'll take it up with Led. He wants the lay members to experience communality. But I don't see a reason why believers of other gods can't take up quarters."

Ragnar snorted. She still didn't quite believe that her friend of old truly worshipped a goddess of death, but then her own inclination was towards one that personified volcanoes. Not the most friendly of environs either. Grimly she dispelled her dour thoughts and went to go begin the work of the cleansing.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 17, 2009, 05:03:22 pm**

14th of Obsidian 09 Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

There has been ample keeping us busy this winter, surprisingly. With the bone-chilling cold outside I would have expected no problems from the living, only the dead. But that appears not to be the case. Nearly a week ago Fre returned with the report of a goblin patrol that had been attacked by zombie mountain goats to the north-east of us. The patrol was so flustered they're still there.

Disturbingly a second patrol made it unseen all the way to our entrance. I was on station at the bottom of the stairs thankfully. It seemed a good location for me to help anyone in the crack, the cursed crack as Ragnar insists on calling it. And the entrance has been relatively calm of late. One of the masons working on block in the upper hall though sounded the alarm when a goblin stumbled into one of our cage traps and another goblin patrol sprang up in ambush just as I made it up the stairs. We charged each other but to their dismay their leader fell into our cunning cage traps a mere five feet from my position. My hammer met another just behind him a second later sending him slamming into a goblin behind him a moment later and knocking them both down. The rest tried to run and I managed to down one before it gained the freedom of open air before turning on the goblin still lying in a tangle of limbs on the floor.

Only the one managed to get away.

This does, however, bring up an interesting problem. We've now got over half a dozen thieves and cut-throats in cages. Perhaps we should just use them as military fodder.

At least until we can capture a zombie troll in a trap and hold pit matches.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **April 22, 2009, 03:44:02 am**

This deserves to be kept on the first page if you ask me!

Keep up the good work mate.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 22, 2009, 10:14:36 pm**

((Thanks Sneaky Pete. I'm actually headed out of town for a few days for a family member's wedding so I'll be idle for a little while. I promise I'll continue with the development when I'm caught back up next week.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Glacies** on **May 08, 2009, 12:04:23 pm**

Hey?

Is this still going?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 08, 2009, 12:09:04 pm**

((Hey Glacies. Yes it is. At the moment I'm just about caught up on all my behind work and I have a massive project coming due at the end of the month. That being said, I will try to post today, and continue on next week if I can manage it.

I've also been taking some time to design the mega-project. It's hard to render things in 3-D from just a 2-D image. Heh. But it's coming along. It'll take a few years probably in game time to finish but work will begin as soon as I have everything laid out properly.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **May 08, 2009, 04:00:28 pm**

((Good to hear. I've been waiting with a fair bit of anticipation as to how that arena turns out.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 08, 2009, 11:45:33 pm**

((Heh, that'll be part of the construction I'm sure. Eventually. But I'll get this back up and running next week.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 12, 2009, 05:07:38 pm**

21st of Obsidian, the Cursed Crack



The air in the tunnel was stale and had there been more than the three dwarves crouched in the unfinished shaft it might have quickly become unbearable. Kolok's axe-head lay unsheathed on the rough stone floor, his hands resting on the vertical shaft as he propped himself up with it. Quietly he whispered to the others:

"I'ma ready. Is it time yet?"

Ragnar shrugged, her shoulders large and bulky beneath her tunic again from constant labor. She had filled out somewhat again after her prolonged bed-rest and then travels and was looking more herself, in body if not in spirit.

Paulus cocked his head at Kolok and conversationally quipped. "Why are you whispering. They're dead. It's not like they can hear us."

Kolok's eyebrow went up. "Really?"

"Aye, I've never seen them attack unless some living thing was visible. In any case, are you ready Ragnar?"

Conserving her breath she simply shrugged non-committally again and hoisted her pick as the others readied their weapons. Her sure steady stroked brought the wall in front of them crashing down in a measured pile and a dim light filtered in from the luminescent fungus that grew in the giant crevasse, the only form of life as far as any knew.

The wall of fetid air hit them like a slap and Kolok unwisely sucked it in, turning a slight shade of green as Paulus and Ragnar led the assault into the mass of undead flesh.

It was perhaps a mercy that the near darkness obliterated details, but the keen dwarven eyes could still pick out movement readily enough, until the thick wafting clouds of miasma and flies obscured much of their vision. For their part the zombie troglodytes and zombie demon rats didn't really know what hit them. Nor did they truly care. They shuffled forward, lunging at the hated living with single-minded determination to snuff it out and with the unfeeling flesh of the long-since deceased.

Paulus charged straight ahead into a small knot of undead troglodytes while Ragnar took the squealing pack of rats to the east, holding them at bay with his heavy pick, while Kolok regained his composure. A rat nearly took hold of his leg in it's foul mouth but couldn't find a good hold on the worn mule leather high boots she wore. She kicked it off and in an instant slipped into a sort of combat trance, gaining little ground but fending of nearly a dozen vermin at once, taking time to lash out with her pick from time to time.



And then Kolok was at her side, cutting into the dead flesh with his axe, cleaving the furry maggot-filled corpses asunder with ease and helping to clear the way. The pair worked steadily, driving the undead towards the fissure in front of them when a body of a rat suddenly

went sailing by them on a slant, Paulus chasing after it quickly, and turning the corner into the remaining undead. His charge dispersed and disorganized them, and the three fell into a fell rhythm, pick, axe and hammer rising and falling in a gruesome cadence.

The miasma was so thick with freshly disturbed flies and putrid odors that Paulus nearly slipped off the cliff after slamming a rat into the far wall on the other side of the crevasse. He would have done so had Kolok not caught his arm to steady him, and turning he gave Kolok a grateful nod before turning again on the undead.

The battle was over long before the three stopped swinging their weapons. An uncanny trick of the light made it appear that the corpses continued to twitch long after the foul magics had returned them to their thoroughly dead state. Ragnar cleared her throat and spat on the corpse of a troglodyte that she'd been fending off until a blow from the side by one of the others had felled it.

"Bloody undead. Kin they nae stay down?" Tramping off again down the tunnel she made her way back to the surface as Kolok and Paulus made their way back more slowly.

"What's eating her?"

Paulus shrugged. "Not completely sure. The undead for one. She always was one for fighting the living, particularly goblins. And she's been out of combat for a while now, I suspect she's missing her axe."

Kolok's hands tightened subconsciously around the haft of his weapon, His axe, before he forced himself to relax again. Long gone were the days when he might have been stripped of his weapon to equip another. Ragnar might take his axe up should he fall, but not until then, of her own choice.

"Can we get the forges up soon?"

Again a shrug. "I'm not sure. The only known magma source is a considerable distance away. We might try using lumber for a while, keep you in work, but we've been so busy with other things. That and we've only a few chunks of marble to make steel with. It'll be hard to get good weapons here, at least for a while. Might have to resort to importing them."

Kolok shook his head. At least his own work was simple. Clearing lumber or hewing down enemies, living or dead, was enjoyable enough for him. He was content with that. But he could understand Ragnar's unhappiness, could even sympathize.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 14, 2009, 04:57:08 pm**

27th of Obsidian

"You there! Miner!"

Sarah turned slowly back towards the dining hall just as she was about to head upstairs and out into the vast white of the outside. For a glimmer of a second she was grateful that she wouldn't have to go out into the blinding white mountainside. The sunshine that reflected off the snow had nearly blinded Fre just a half-week before and she spent a day or three inside, sleeping it off until her eyes didn't hurt.

But when she saw the bone-clad figure of the Hound approaching she was no longer so sure.

As he got closer his features stuck out more, his dark beard braided and tucked under his steel chainmail shirt. Hers too grew more distinct for him and he was able to recognize her.

"Ah, Cero... er... Sarah. Yes. I need you in the Crack for a bit."

She shuddered slightly. The Cursed crack as the other miners had been calling it both repulsed and intrigued her. They'd been clearing the areas near their entrance, both around but particularly below, and the pair walked up to the edge until they both stood at the very cusp of the crevasse, slicing down into the earth into blackness beneath them.

"So... er... Hound, what was it you ... wanted?" She was somewhat out of her element here, but it comforted her somewhat to know that he too had been a miner, and if what Ragnar had said was true, at one point a rather skillful one. Of the three official miners she was the least skilled. erith was above searching out gemstones from the hillsides for her to cut and polish later. Ragnar was still drinking her memories of the last tunnel into submission. Ragnar had been working in the Crack and had dug into a pocket they'd spied something in. She'd been told it was only a zombie rat, but hadn't bothered to pay attention to size. The shambling rotten rodent that greeted her when she broke through hadn't been cat size like a normal rat, nor even dog size like the demon rats, whose eyes glowed in the dark, even in death. It hadn't even been pony sized like the large rats that sometimes infested old caverns. No, this had once been a behemoth of a creature, a zombie Giant rat. Fully the size of a human drafthorse it towered above Ragnar by several feet when she broke through. She'd charged it and sunk her pick into it's head, but when it tore her weapon out of her hands and advanced on her unfazed she knew she was overmatched and quickly fled back down the tunnels. The other miners had learned not to harass her about that incident, running was not something Ragnar was fond of, running away even less. In the end the Hound had come to deal with it, his hammer more effective that the pick in sending it back to their goddess.

She realized only then that the Hound had said something and she'd been standing there gazing down in silence.

"I'm sorry... what?"

"I said, there's a zombie giant mole down there on that ledge." His hammer extended downward towards the location.

"We missed that ledge entirely on our previous sweeps. I need you to open up a tunnel to it for me."

She quailed back from the ledge at the sight of it as it poked it's head out balefully and stared up at them, dead eyes strangely dull and dark. She nodded numbly and headed through the side door hidden in the rock. Halfway down to the lower bridge she passed another area they'd cleared less than a week before. The bones of naked mole dogs lay in quiet repose, but it was the glitter of the large galena vein that drew her eyes. She wished she could be mining that out instead but dutifully crossed the bridge. Crossing, the Crack loomed beneath her yet again, a river of darkness flowing through the mountain, no smaller for her being another 20 floors deeper into the earth. But at least she could still mine, and with the Hound walking quietly behind her, clinking only slightly, she felt little fear of death. The right hand of Mondul would watch over her.



((And Paulus is a hammerman again now that he's no longer out hunting with Fre.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (New Fort starting pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 15, 2009, 02:10:09 pm**

Paulus stood stiffly near the entrance to their fortress, loose rocks and unfinished stone still cluttering the hall in front of him, as well as a few pieces of assorted clothing removed from the fallen goblins had had attacked there many months ago. There simply hadn't been time to take them all down below yet and there was as good a place as any for now. Paulus was lost in his thoughts as he stood watch, planning and designing things in his mind while his body was sub-consciously aware of the world around him. The sun was just about setting outside and he could feel the fleeting warmth as the feeble winter sun let out it's dying gasp before being swallowed up the the far western horizon.

He sighed. It would take a long time to get everything done around this place with as few dwarves as dared to make the journey and stay. As if on cue with the setting sun he heard a call come up from below, calling the faithful to a service. The first they'd formally had since settling here. Led would be changing that now that they'd become more established. Strangely he'd never been to one, nor did he feel much inclination to go now. He knew his role and whom he worshipped. He did not think the goddess would mind if he didn't go, he would serve her well enough in his own way.

A sound alerted him to motion from behind him and he whirled, hand going to his hammer, tethered loosely to his back. But he relaxed when he saw Fre come up from below, having taken the ramp rather than the stairs, Der Kartoffel in tow and both carrying two heaped platters of food, one of roast heron, and swan, as well as another unidentifiable but savory smelling piece of roasted meat. The stone platter that Der Kartoffel bore had a variety of biscuits, seed cakes and the like. Fre smiled when she saw him and nodded to him as she passed.

"Ye comin' ta our little shindig up top then, aye?"

He nodded, following after. "Aye, I'll come. I can keep watch well enough from there."

"Good, Ragnar, Oddbodd and Pete'll be up shortly with the kegs and I think Boink managed to pilfer a few mugs from the bins for us. It'll be just like old times."

Paulus shook his head slightly.

"It'll never be like old times again. But it will be close enough."

Fre sighed slightly. She knew what he meant, though Der Kartoffel might not. They'd both been through much since they had first been thrown together so long ago now. How long had it been. Twenty years? Thirty? Time wore differently on dwarves than the other races, but it could still be felt. They'd been young together at Dorenemal, well, all except Ragnar. She pushed those thoughts out of her mind, for too often they led her back to to memories with Aardvark that she'd just as soon forget. Aye, things would never again be quite the same.

The others came up from below, Kolok from the slopes outside where he'd been felling trees again, but the others came with the drink and mugs and soon the food was all gone, the platters lying in the cold snow as the light from the departing sun fled in streaks of red and yellow and purple in the west.

Ragnar seemed surprised that Paulus was there at all.

"Oi, thought you'd be b'low. With de others."

Paulus merely shook his head.

"Nae, this is where I need to be. Mondul is a patient goddess and doesn't require as much zeal as Led thinks sometimes is needed. I'm a worshipper of her, not of her church."

Ragnar snorted, but more gently than previously.

"Well, it's good ta ken ye still remember yer friends."

"Don't worry. I'll not forget you so quickly. My faith is a slow burning fire, not the flame of tinder that burns hot and bright and is then gone."

Ragnar nodded and even smiled slightly at that. "Aye, dat's how I feel about my belief too."

"There are three kinds of worshippers, the devout, the opportunistic and the fanatic. The first believes, the second desires and the third imposes. I consider myself a devout, to greater or lesser degree."

"Aye, well, enough talk. Dat barrel's full and mah belly's empty enough still."

Der Kartoffel excused himself after the meal, he'd wanted to hear the service below for the worshippers of Mondul, just to see what it was like, while the others broke into the kegs. Two were plump helmet wine, recently made unfortunately, and the other was dwarven ale, a keg they'd gotten from the merchants last year and an older, and more potent, brew than the former. They all filled their cups to the brim and looked expectantly at Paulus.

Solemnly he raised his cup.

"Another year has passed and died. Another year begins.

To the Fahlstrom clan then, all of us. May it long prosper."

They raised their cups in tribute and intoned:

"To the clan!", before emptying the mugs.

An icy wind picked up around midnight as they drank on the summit of their peak, but only Pete, accustomed to warmer climes even felt the cold. The others merely felt at home again.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **May 15, 2009, 04:24:14 pm**

((Excellent, just excellent. It's good to see this back in full swing again.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **May 15, 2009, 08:43:18 pm**

Quote from: Frelock on May 15, 2009, 04:24:14 pm

((Excellent, just excellent. It's good to see this back in full swing again.))

quoted for truth.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Draconius** on **May 15, 2009, 09:56:44 pm**

Having spent the last week or so reading this whole thread, I must say, bravo. Best one I've ever read.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 16, 2009, 12:21:17 pm**

((Thanks for the commments!))

15th of Granite, Record of the first High Priest, Led.

The elves have arrived again to trade, though I must agree with Paulus there is something peculiar about them. In particular what they've brought. I honestly expected to find their usual rope reed cloth and assorted berries but these elves have brought a bar of celestium, as well as a few other baser metals, wooden weapons (two swords) ((finally I can get you started in on training Glacies)) barrels of booze they've made, including something they call Sunshine, as well as some sunberries, and perhaps most strangely of all some shovels. Clearly of dwarven manufacture but equally obviously designed for human use. The height of the handles alone attests to that. The fact that two were made of High Steel and one of Terronite was further proof of their dwarven origins.

It was probably good that Paulus was working in the Crack when they came. We shall see if relations with them continues in this fashion. Paulus advises against even letting them in our halls, and after the goods we've seen them bring I find myself being more than a little suspicious of them as well.

Also of note is that some more avarii "merchants" have arrived. No less than four, with pack animals. They've taken forever to arrive though and we finished trading with the elves before they've showed up here at all. We'll have to keep an eye on them. Several of them seem to be sporting severe headaches or something.

A most unusual month. I find the avarii strange and the elves perhaps more so, them being very different from the elves of our old land. These elves even accepted leather goods, something our previous trade partners never would have considered.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 18, 2009, 02:13:26 pm**

21st of Granite 10

The high priest stood at the top of the peak, on the level ground that once had been the home of the original trading post of Geshud Osod. Now only scattered blocks littered the side, including two piles of large and rather expensive looking platinum blocks, bought years earlier and never assigned to a specific storage. Even the entryway beneath them was littered with cut stone blocks of many varieties. Where once had been their living quarters and workshops now housed only stone, and the masons that made them.



Led held several pieces of recently made vellum in his hands, the donkey hide still supple and uncracked by age. The Hound stood behind him, surveying the other direction, keeping a wary eye out to the east where another insectoid patrol had been spotted tearing apart undead on the neighboring peak. They were well out of sight, but were still a danger should they begin moving.

Glacies came up from below, tucking her hammer and chisel absently into a worn belt-pouch at her waist and dusting the flakes and debris off her clothing as she ascended to meet with the pair of them.

"Oi sir. I heard I was wanted up here by you."

Led raised his head slightly and looked her over for some time before speaking.

"Aye, 'twas you that is needed by the church now, Glacies. I've heard your ideas and have spoken to Mondul. It is time you begin your formal training as priestess to the goddess."

Glacies hesitated for only a brief second. "Formal training? Have I a choice? What if I don't want to?"

"From what I hear you've been espousing your views as doctrine and are beginning to become persuasive in convincing others that Mondul's realm includes other aspects of death than those I've discussed in our sermons."

She raised her hands defensively. "But I..."

Led made a jerking motion with his hand across his chest. "No, hear me out. It's not that you preach heresy, or even that we, ... She doesn't approve. But you remain untested. Should you wish to take this direction in life it is time you were proven. That you begin to understand the true nature of cold and death as they pertain to each other."

She raised an eyebrow and took an defiant stance. "And what if I don't like this 'test'?"

Led shrugged. "You cease to spout your beliefs and you may continue on here."

"Or else what?"

Paulus turned and took a step up to stand next to Led as the high priest continued.

"Or else the Hound of Mondul will administer to you the final rites."

She looked at the hound, who stood, unflinching and apparently not caring in the least about either answer she might produce.

"Then I'll take your 'test'."

Led smiled and clapped her on the shoulder, but there was no smile in Glacies' eye at the expression. Nonplussed Led continued, handing her the small stack of vellum in his hands.

She took them and began looking over the detailed layout and scaled drawings and slowly her eyes widened.

"What's this then? Designs for a building? What do you expect me to do with them?"

"You're a mason, are you not? I'm now making you the Chief of construction for our fortress. You're the Head-mason as it were now and I'll let you organize your crews to begin construction of this."

He went and marked a spot on the ground several paces behind them.

"This spot is to be the center and focal point. I want all prisoners cages set up out here and rigged for the ground-breaking ceremony by this next winter. This is also to be the center point for the design."

"The Hound nodded. I'll see to the prisoners."

"Good. Glacies, any questions?"

She folded her arms across her stomach. "Aye, how by the bloody stones does this constitute a test then?"

"You've heard my sermons, aye?"

"Aye."

"What am I always saying about life?"

"You say that Life, is, in a word, Death."

"Indeed. If that is true, and I believe it to be so, then the opposite is true as well. These things are intertwined. You're reasonably young still, but you may observe this in time. The longer we live, the more we come to accept the inevitability and permanency of Death."

"I'll buy that. Still though..." she said, waving the plans in the cold air vaguely.

Led sighed. "We can discuss this after you've had time to think about this for a while. Consider this the first part of your test. Figuring out why I've set you these tasks and what they have to do with what we believe. Do not take this lightly though. You will be in charge of building the Temple of Mondul. It is not a trivial undertaking.

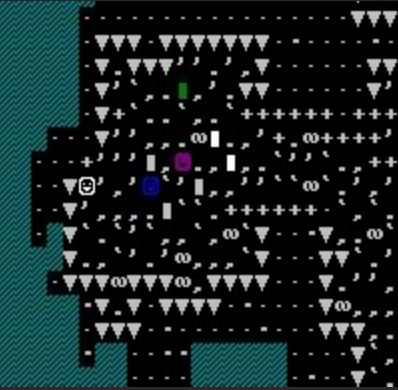
If you have questions about supplies and materials please speak with Thesaurusaurus. I expect you to provide weekly reports of progress to him. I also expect personal weekly progress reports, both on the temple and your meditations from during your work. If you have any design or security questions see the Hound."

"The Hound?" she clearly wondered if she had heard that last sentence correctly. "What does he have to do with the designs?"

Led smiled as he and Paulus strode below.

""Twas he that designed all of it."

Glacies stood in the frigid spring air with the plans in her hand and she looked at the pair of departing dwarves in a new light. There was more to them than she had initially guessed. And she had much to think about.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 19, 2009, 03:08:49 pm**

7th of Slate, 10 Journal of the High Priest

Another of our dwarves was taken with the creative urges today. Seemingly out of nowhere one of Thesaurusaurus' sons picked up a large chunk of granite and headed to the craftsdwarf workshop. It is most unfortunate that few were there to witness the creation as apparently the child began to prophesy regarding the future. I've interviewed all that witnessed and heard even a portion of what was said and am in the process of compiling it. It will likely take considerably more time to finish but from what I've been able to piece together the artifact that he created as the 'matching twin' of Rigothevud, which in turn, it seems, may have alluded to the creation of Gostangkamuk abir, or The Awe-inspiring Priest of Romancing.



The twin artifacts themselves are simple and, from snippets gleaned from assorted onlookers, seem to portent a central rule of the nation from this very location. The scepter symbolizes the rule of law, according to Mosus, or whatever spirit possessed him. And the crown the

lineage of royalty. To be honest I understand little of what was supposedly said and believe even less of it at the moment, but I shall pray for enlightenment after examining the artifacts once again.

There is also the matter to consider that no timeline was given in the prophesy, so I suppose it is conceivably possible that at some future date the clan will have need of us as a refuge where others have failed. But such speculation is at this point somewhat moot. It has, however, caused quite a stir among the followers and several of them seemed to be either disturbingly agitated thinking that the nobility that spurned and persecuted them may set up shop here, or they seemed to be sincerely glorying the name of Mondul for her gift of knowledge. It has thrown matters into considerable disarray, but I think it shall settle down in time.

Out of the mouth of babes and whatsits, as it were though.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **May 19, 2009, 04:27:17 pm**

Hmm... Glacies doesn't seem to be the 'average' priest, eh?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 19, 2009, 04:33:24 pm**

((True, but keep in mind that this is still the formation of the church. Definitions of roles and titles isn't established at all yet. As of right now Led is the High priest but lesser roles haven't been organized. It's not like falling into an established pattern. He's basically creating a church to Mondul from the ground up, infrastructure, religious offices and everything, as Mondul would want it made. Or at least he's trying to. I expect there to be considerable opposition to it, both internal and external. Looking through history, very few religions didn't eventually fraction into two or more separate ones. So basically he's taking Glacies to task and testing her value and dedication.

To be honest, I think Glacies is suitably ~~normal~~ ~~insane~~ dwarven. Most of the others here aren't quite normal either. You'd have to not be to worship a goddess of death without actually being evil. The 'normal' ones by comparison are actually the loyalists, like Fre, Ragnar, Oddbodd, Pete, etc. who are, in reality quite far from common themselves.

And things will only get worse. ;)

So be patient. Organizing a religion is not something done in a day, or even a year. Unless you happen to be Deity. In which case you can manage it, but it's still full of imperfect people who make mistakes and want to take things in their own directions.

And in response to your post directly below: Yes. For now. Heh. Having your son create an artifact and prophesy would certainly help boost your reputation. Oh, and you're already a Legendary recordkeeper. But there are many ways to fall from grace, and your position is one that schemers and powermongers would covet.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **May 19, 2009, 04:35:33 pm**

((So Thesaurusaurus is the second in command of a church that's being founded? Sweet.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 21, 2009, 02:44:28 pm**

Late Felsite

The prisoner's cages had been set and secured to the stone above the 1st hall, and Paulus was working with Sarah to connect them to the lever set a tantalizing fifty feet away from them. Oddbodd worked below making the needed mechanisms for the rest of the project while these two got a head start. The prisoners themselves bore the move with varying degrees of calm. The tigerman remained perfectly still in a proud and almost indignant manner, while the lizardman hissed with displeasure at being removed from the warmer interior. Rumor had it that the lizardmen too lived in vast stone warrens, not unlike dwarven ones, but deep to the south in the steamy jungles. Few were the stories that came from such places and it was said that they were carnivorous, eating other sentient species with the same zeal as beasts.

But it was the goblins that proved to be the troublesome ones. They would spit and try to pinch and bite and claw at any exposed limb they could reach and only a swift clout to the head that knocked them unconcious let the move be done with any ease at all. Rigging the doors to open was a simple matter in comparison, though one that had to be handled with care. Again the goblins were the most likely to understand such complex mechanisms and manage an escape. The pair of dwarves was above working on yet another cage when the elves finally left after trading, making their way slowly down the mountainside towards the north, where it had only just thawed. The Hound spat on the ground as they past but said no more, focusing instead on his work. Unsurprisingly the Avarii left shortly after them, but again, considerable slowness marked their passing and to onlookers it seemed as if they were in pain as they travelled, burdened down by some unseen weight that grated on nerves.

And then, as suddenly as the strike of stone against stone filling the air, one of their minds snapped. The weight of the soil around him filled him with inexpressible rage and in a fury he lashed out at the only living things near him. His own caravan. As his massive wings stretched out behind him he looked like a fallen angel, covered in the blood of his beloved animal, and he chased down and slew over half of his own caravan, the others fleeing in terror.



And then the pressure in his head overcame him and he lost all sense of time, clutching his head as darkness surrounded him.

It was an hour later, or perhaps a day, or even a week later that his sight grew bright again but still that persistent pain drove his broken mind into a frenzy of rage. Two figures approached from the east, coming down the slope towards him. The taller of the two was clearly a dwarf, a female of indeterminate age but wreathed in power. Around her shoulders was draped a cape of utter blackness that obscured all it covered. It stood open at the front and in her left hand was clasped a blue radiant fire, in her right a long dagger, carved in ancient

dwarven runes that glowed black and purple in the dim daylight.

At her right side strode another, a dwarf as well and wearing a mask of bone so that he looked like the lady's pet, but more deadly. He wielded a simple steel hammer but carried it with practiced grace, his movements defining the familiarity with which he did his work. A white radiance flowed from him too and the Avar could tell in a flash of insight that they served order, but his insanity had grown too strong within himself. A small part of his mind knew then what had happened even while the rest of him raged at the intruders and sent his body hurtling to destroy them. That small part of his mind welcomed the release as the hammer crushed his leg, sending him sprawling to the ground. It took several more blows to subdue his body but with each he felt more himself, until with his final strength he raised his head to look at the pair of dwarves. His focus found the Lady and he smiled at her through the pain and blood, knowing that their allies of old had not abandoned them.

And with the final stroke, he found peace.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 22, 2009, 12:07:32 pm**

12th of Hematite

Work had already begun below ground, clearing out the designated area for the temple to Mondul. All dwarves helped, believers and unbelievers alike on this project. It was work to do and though it gave glory to only one of their gods, it still strengthened the whole. Other temples would be erected in time to other deities, or so they assumed.

Ragnar wiped the sweat off of her brow as she stepped out of the shearing shaft around the bulk of what would become the temple to Mondul. The design was efficient. Nearly half the temple would be carved out of the living stone of the mountain itself, from peak down to the valley below. It would require a massive amount of work for them, but she knew the masons would have an equally arduous task. Namely, constructing the upper half from blocks that they themselves would need to make.

It's not that she particularly needed a break. Her muscles had regained their vigor of old in her labors but she felt a dryness in her throat that needed to be quenched, and too much time in solitude gave her too much time for thought. She realized now that she'd been very near a breaking point, and that Paulus had sensed it as well. They'd stopped clearing the crack for a season in order to focus on the temple and she felt better for it. Images of the undead rats still haunted her dreams from time to time, even though she felt little fear of them now.

She squinted at the bright sunshine of the early summer's day. A heady fragrance of wildflowers and trees wafted up from the valley floor just below and from her low-lying elevation she could still see out over much of the valley to the west. Hefting her pick onto her shoulder she sucked in some of the fresh clean air blowing in from the west and nodded. The heat wasn't unbearable, in fact, the morning chill had just now dissipated, even though it was almost noon. She took her time heading in for a drink though, the sun warming her back as she climbed the steep slope.

And then up ahead and off to her right a movement caught her eye. One of the stones moved and she caught sight of a very slight twitch of tail. She did her best to sneak up but her feet would not heed her need for silence and sent rocks skittering as she moved. The tail froze as she approached and then as if sensing that she'd been discovered the tigerman's head popped up over the boulder, looking straight at Ragnar.

For a split second they both froze before the thief bolted, far too quickly for the burly dwarf to catch up. Unfazed Ragnar continued on up the hill, whistling slightly. The humans had come to trade nearly a three day ago. That would mean fresh supplies, food and drink primarily. And perhaps a decent amount of sewer brew for her. She still drunk it with gusto, despite the memories it gave her of Dorenemal and their time there. She would often still grab two mugs and set them on the table in front of her, one for her and one for the empty chair she left for a friend long since lost.

She passed many dwarves going in and out as she descended and knew they were still cleaning up after the Avarii caravan that'd gone insane. The goods were still lying out strewn on the hillsides and the goods could be used to barter with the humans well enough. The tall dark humans still seemed strange to her but they had warrior hearts and that she could understand well. They often spoke amongst themselves in their odd clicking tongue, though they spoke dwarvish passably enough. Their coming would mean other things as well. Bars of metal, possibly wood and the occasional odd weapon or bin of cloth or leather.

She nodded again to herself. Life was getting better here, despite everything. It had been long since she was this content. Before her injury had left her bedridden for so long.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 22, 2009, 02:50:59 pm**

((Oops... didn't mean to post that yet. I'll finish it up later...

In any case, if you feel like you'd like your character to take a specific direction in the story feel free to let me know. Fre and Ragnar I've already got plans for, should they not die. If you'd like to influence those feel free to post either in character or OOC. Glacies, of course is already being worked into the plot as is Thesaurusaurus. And Oddbodd, as the childhood survivor of Olonkulet, the City of Brass is already worked into my plans. I've even got a plan for Der Kartoffel. So, I guess that leaves Pete, Kolok, Boink, Sarah, and Aardvark (if Fre doesn't kill you) if you want to help define your direction, I'm wide open. The rest I can probably easily accomodate most things as well of course.

But keep in mind that my plot development is slow and I usually have considerable foreshadowing before I actually get to specific events. (Fre I promise that you'll get your tavern, assuming Hunting in a savage Neutral/Evil zone doesn't kill you.)))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **May 22, 2009, 03:27:30 pm**

((I'm a dwarf. I can deal with it. How's Fre's skill sheet working out, anyhow?))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Keita** on **May 22, 2009, 03:50:08 pm**

wow, amasing stuff, is there some space for me to join in this epic thread?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 22, 2009, 05:29:27 pm**

((Fre, you're skills are doing well. I've had you on hunting for a while now so your cooking isn't great, but it's improving rapidly. Your marksdwarfship is very good which is why I've pulled you off of hunting. That and you've eliminated the persistent breeding wildlife problem. You've been bringing in a lot of food, swans, herons, beavers (mentioned at the last new year feast) and otters. So, you're doing well. Despite all the hunting you're only a Dabbling Ambusher. Not sure how to improve that.

Metal Militia, you're welcome to join. I have plenty of female cultists at the moment. I've capped the population for now so if you're willing to be female there is lots of room. Just give me the specs on your character and any preferences and I'll find the best fit.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Keita** on **May 23, 2009, 05:20:45 am**

awesome

Khain
mace user if possible

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Draconius** on **May 23, 2009, 10:04:36 pm**

Oh I want in too please :) I don't really care what he/she is, and gender is basically optional for dwarves anyway... I just want in on this epic story :)

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 23, 2009, 10:19:21 pm**

((You're welcome to join Draconius. At the moment we have only female dwarves due to a 2:1 gender imbalance. I will need the following: (From you too Metal Militia if you haven't provided it yet)
-Name
-Preferred weapon (if you want to go military which is not formed nor is close to forming at the moment.)
-Preferred civilian job (if any. Lots of masons at the moment, don't really need much else but I've got unclaimed variety)
Whether you want to be a cultist or loyalist, and if cultist whether you intend to follow Glaices path of cold centered worship or not
Any preferences (optional)
Direction you want your character to go (if you feel so inclined)

Background is up to you, i'll do my best to work it in if you write one))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Keita** on **May 24, 2009, 01:15:41 pm**

Khain

Hammer

smith/furnace operator/wood burner

loyalist

no perferences really

possibly hammerlord or legendary smith - whichever comes first

Khain is under self exil, has a personal code of conduct that doesn't always coensides with what should be done/ what is "right", very mistrustful of others.

she's kinda like the outcast thats only here because it's better than the alternative.

also can you tell me where the story starts proper as it's a long thread and will take me a long time to read it all

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **May 24, 2009, 02:18:36 pm**

How's Oddbod doing?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Draconius** on **May 25, 2009, 12:33:25 am**

Draconius

Crossbow

Miner, if possible, but mason is fine too.

Fanatic Cultist. I want to be that one guy whose such a zealot the other cultists are like "dude, chill out". The one whose always accusing others of not being quite devout enough. That guy. :D And I don't know whether he would follow Glacies or not, whichever makes for a better story. :)

He's not a bad guy. Just very, very devout. Maybe a little crazy. (Beyond dwarfish norms.) I'm thinking he had a "vision" after some cave-in induced head-trauma that led him to a life of worship.

Replace all occurences of he and him with she and her if appropriate.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 25, 2009, 03:48:37 pm**

Mid-Malachite

Thesaurusaurus poked his head into the large chamber that had originally been intended as a boneyard for the High priest to work in. It was devoid of all bones, and even the second chamber off to the west contained none, merely a stacked set of stone of each type they'd found so far for future use. There were a few dwarves working in the room, however, bringing in blocks to construct the new kennels, or securing ropes to the ground or sandy walls with heavy iron stakes. This was to be the new animal husbandry area, where breeding and training would occur. It was not coincidental that it was located immeadiately behind the butcheries and kitchen areas.

"Anyone see Led around?"

One of the dwarves grunted as he set down a solid granite block with a dull thump.

"Last ah heard t'was near the Depot, finishin wi'de trade liason."

Thesuarusaurus nodded briefly and made his way back through the kitchens and down to the second hall, from there to the craftshall and then up to the depot. He knew the way well, and had been here the day before recording the new goods brought and the old ones sold in his heavy vellum ledger. He arrived just in time to see Led shake hands with the dark-skinned human twice his size before parting ways.

"Sir, ..."

"Thesaurusaurus, just call me Led. How many times do I have to tell you?"

"Aye, well, I've been hearing rumors of this but I thought you'd want to know. It borders on blasphemy."

Led raised an eyebrow and allowed the record-keeper to guide him towards the Crack. They stopped on the small ledge that looked down into the darkness, Thesaurusaurus' breath coming in slight pants. Led looked at him.

"Well?"

"All right. Take a look off to the south. And down a few levels."

He looked hard into the darkness as Thesaurusaurus shut the door behind them to block out the light. It took him a few minutes for his eyes to adjust to the utter darkness but gradually his dwarven eyesight showed him what lay beyond the view of normal light. Off in the distance he could just barely make out a small ledge. Several zombie goblins shuffled about in the little space they had.

"What of them? Surely they're too far away to be bothering people?"

"Oh, aye. That's not the problem, sir. They've begun Naming them though."

Led looked at them again in a new light and stood there silently for a minute or two.

"Ah. What do they name that odd little one?"

"The one that looks as if he's mooning us sir?"

"Aye, that one."

The scribe sighed and shook his head. "He was the first to be named. I'm afraid 'twas my own children what thought it amusing. Apparently it took on and others began naming the undead cave swallows as they'd fly past below. They call him Cog Ingishetes."

"Cog Bodiceblew?"

Thesaurusaurus shook his head again. "Aye, I'm afraid so."

Led snorted.

"Hmph. Well, I think you need to take your children to task then."

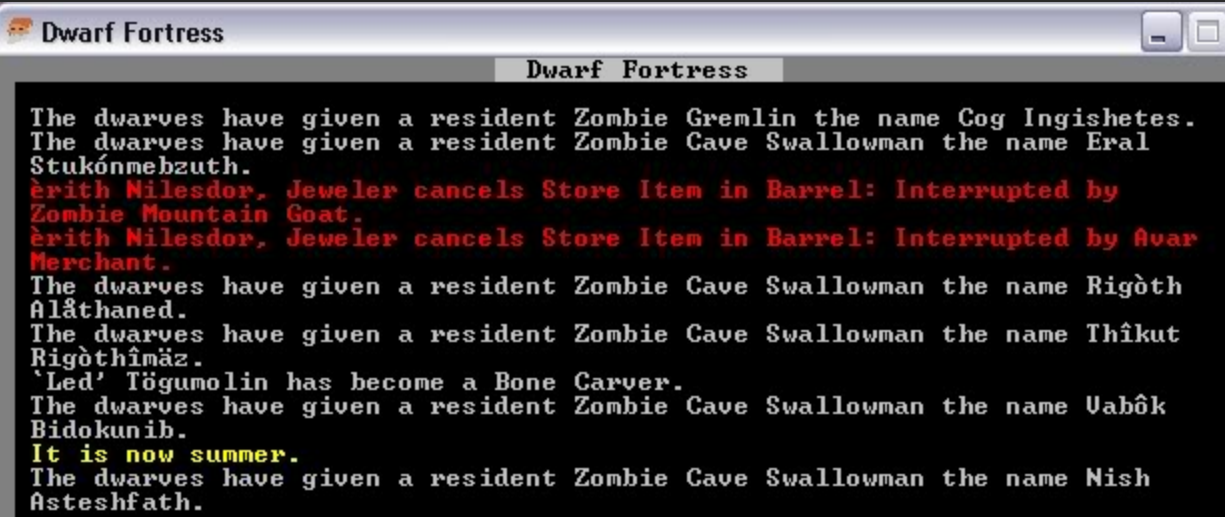
"Yes, I've been meaning to do that, but with their mother gone and me busy so much..."

"No, no, I mean you need to teach them more of the old tongue. Teach them how to say 'semi-sentient little undead bastard' in ancient Dethic before they get too carried away. Bodiceblew... what a name."

The scribe looked as if he were both shocked and hurt.

"But... sir, isn't it blasphemous to..."

"My friend, these undead haven't seen the light of day in an age. Don't worry, let the people have their amusements with the names. The time for undead in this chasm is swiftly passing, soon only memories of them will remain, and it would do to have some of them be remembered as more than a rotting corpse. If only to remind the future of what used to be here."



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Draconius** on **May 25, 2009, 10:28:11 pm**

They jst give them names? For the heck of it? Didn't know they did that..

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 26, 2009, 11:05:33 am**

((yup... apparently after they've been around long enough they start getting names. Most of the cave swallowmen are nowhere near the fortress so I'm not sure if there's a specific pattern. In reality I'm quite sure no dwarf has ever ACTUALLY seen any of the undead in question. They're at least a half dozen screens away up the crevasse.

I'll start looking through the dwarves for suitable characters Metal Militia and Draconius. Everything looks fine except your weapon choice Draconius. It's one of the tenets of the followers of Mondul. Death is a personal and holy thing to witness. No ranged killing is allowed, except by hunters. That is also why there will be no traps except a few strings of cage traps. (Mostly to cut down on annoying thieves and babysnatchers) Feel free to pick another weapon Draconius.

Maggarg, I'll see if I can get summaries of characters up sometime later this week. I'll spoilerize them all for space considerations, and provide kill lists where applicable.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 26, 2009, 06:54:27 pm**

((Ok... here's the character stats. Remember, some of you from the most recent immigrant wave haven't had that much time to hone your skills. And sorry Maggarg... being a mechanic is slow here at the moment. I'll spice it up in the story here soon enough.

General skills:

'Oddhodd' Mersethmistêm, Mec ""Oddhodd' Luckportals" ♂	'Ragnar' Ngotûnîton, Axedwar ""Ragnar' Culthall" ♀	'Kolok' Nunûroddom, Woodcutt ""Kolok' Creviccloisters" Creator of Ishlumâbir, ♂	'Boink' Zuntîrakmam, Jack-of ""Boink' Anvilsinks" ♀
Construct Building	Dig Strong Agile Tough	Make wooden Barrel Extremely Strong Agile Extremely Tough	Drink Strong Agile
Mechanic Dabbling Comedian Dabbling Intimidator Dabbling Judge of Intent Dabbling Persuader Dabbling Negotiator Dabbling Flatterer Dabbling Consoler	Novice Carpenter Novice Wood Cutter Novice Bowyer Expert Miner Dabbling Wrestler	Potash Maker Adept Wood Cutter Legendary Carpenter Dabbling Judge of Intent Dabbling Negotiator Dabbling Consoler Dabbling Pacifier Dabbling Conversationalist Dabbling Comedian Dabbling Persuader Dabbling Flatterer Dabbling Axedwarf Novice Wrestler	Talented Engraver Dabbling Negotiator Dabbling Pacifier Dabbling Judge of Intent Dabbling Comedian Dabbling Conversationalist Dabbling Persuader Dabbling Consoler Dabbling Flatterer Dabbling Intimidator
g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd Space: Done	g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd Space: Done	g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd Space: Done	g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd Space: Done
'Glacies' Alâthvabôk, Priest ""Glacies' Boltorb" Creator of Zulashegdoth Ngob	'Pete' Usânèzum, Metalsmith ""Pete' Murderedhames" ♀	'Fre' Kûbukônul, Cook ""Fre' Lancemirror" ♀	'Thesaurusaurus' Angenlôr, C ""Thesaurusaurus' Fairtools" ♂
Construct rock Cabinet Strong Extremely Agile Extremely Tough	Eat	Prepare Lavish Meal Extremely Strong Agile	On Break Very Strong Extremely Agile Extremely Tough
Legendary Mason Dabbling Pacifier Dabbling Consoler Dabbling Conversationalist Dabbling Flatterer Dabbling Persuader Dabbling Comedian Dabbling Negotiator Dabbling Judge of Intent Dabbling Intimidator	Novice Armorsmith Novice Furnace Operator Novice Metal Crafter	Dabbling Conversationalist Dabbling Negotiator Dabbling Judge of Intent Dabbling Mason Novice Herbalist Dabbling Brewer Novice Grower Expert Marksdwarf Dabbling Ambusher	Proficient Grower Legendary Record Keeper Dabbling Conversationalist Dabbling Consoler Dabbling Negotiator Dabbling Comedian Dabbling Flatterer Dabbling Intimidator Dabbling Pacifier Dabbling Judge of Intent
g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd Space: Done	g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd Space: Done	g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd Space: Done	g:Gen i:Inv p:Pref w:Wnd Space: Done

Kill list:
Ragnar: 2 Z large demon rats, 1 Z large rat
Kolok: 2 Z large demon rats, 1 Z troglodyte, 5 Z gremlins
Led: 1 tigerman thief, 1 lizardman thief
Fre: Officially 10 swans, 4 Herons, 1 beaver, 1 otter. Countless injured that died of related wounds. (I'm not sure if they all count towards her kill tally.)

Artifact characters:
Glacies: Artifact Felsite coffer
Kolok: Artifact Highwood bucket

I'm in the process of replacing our crappy furniture with high quality stuff from these two. Decoration with bone by kills to follow in time.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Draconius** on **May 26, 2009, 10:31:27 pm**

Oh! I knew that. Unarmed then! nothing more up close and personal than that!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **May 27, 2009, 02:51:40 am**

((eat! haha, sounds like something i'd do :D)

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 27, 2009, 12:46:25 pm**

Early Autumn

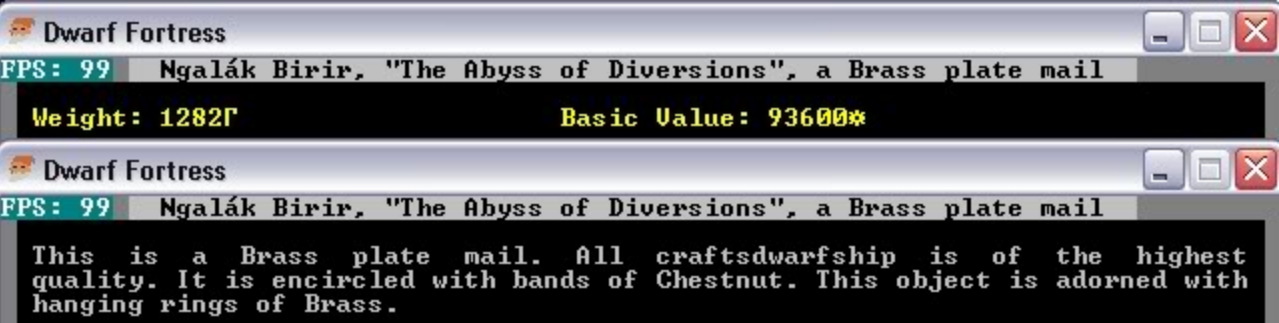
The bright sun had not quite burned through the morning mist over the swamps to the east, but up near the peak the higher winds had whipped the light cover away, revealing the ever blue expanse of sky. Several dwarves were already toiling in the early morning sun, a small group having been sent out today to gather in the remaining items that the avarii merchants had left behind at their death. Pete was one of these though she knew that soon enough she would finally have her hands full of her preferred work.

The woodburners and smelters had been completed in the craftshall, just to the south of the second hall. The forge, only one for now, was slated to be finished this morning. Led had used Paulus diagrams to lay out the needed components and left Mondul's blessing upon it. A fitting thing considering what would be made upon it.

As Pete crossed the deep corner of the valley separating their entrance from the rest of the peak it seemed to suddenly go dark, as if a cloud had crossed over the sun. Pete quickly looked up through the dimming light to see the clear blue sky, paler and fainter than before and gradually a darkness stole across her vision. The faintest sounds of laughter filled her ears, like the tinkling of a far off bell, feminine in quality and it was the last she heard before oblivion engulfed her.

Pete Usanezum has been Possessed!

The darkness seemed to last an infinite amount of time when suddenly a light flared in front of her. The ruddy glow of a lantern and the red-yellow glow of the forge-fires were unfamiliar to her. The glistening turtle-bone decorated anvil she recognized however, and that solid block of metal comforted her. Before her on the bench lay a magnificent creation, a cuirass and backplate complete with shoulder plates and gorget gleamed dully in the firelight, and for a second she thought she saw unknown runes gleaming on it. But when she blinked they were gone and she realized that the brass platemail itself rippled in the light, wooden bands polished to a gleam provided relief and texture to the smooth metal surface. Hanging rings of brass added decoration and function, serving to tie all the individual pieces together into a cohesive unit.



Had she created it?

She could not remember.

She heard a sound behind her and caught only a glimpse of a dwarf, unrecognizable to her in the light.

The dwarf, now long gone clutched at his head, willing his thoughts through mental excercises, performing calculations, complex gear systems, anything to escape the sight of that creation that seemed to bring so many memories crashing back into his mind.

Oddbodd fled, into the dark.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 28, 2009, 01:58:28 pm**

Mid-Autumn 10

Etud glanced up as they crested the hill before entering into the first hall of Geshud Osod. It was a pleasant sight for him, seeing the thieves of various races gaoled out in the weather and being used as bait to attract undead. The merchant felt no remorse for the trapped creatures, they plagued his every step, assaulted his caravan as they slept, stole what they could and, on rare occasion, managed to actually wound his crew.

His smile was stolen away as he passed into the halls of the Fortress of Bones however. The first hall was visibly more packed with building materials than last time. He'd have to report that to his ... contact. They were planning something big, and the nobles still maintained a contrary aligned stance to the cultists, the death worshippers, despite the King's leniency. Or perhaps because of it.

Passing down the half smoothed ramp into the lower realms of the mountain he entered the sixth hall, the trade hall. A small tower-cap was just pushing it's way out of the dirt in the corner of the chamber. He'd see to that before he was done as well. Stacks of bins and goods greeted him and nearby lay piles of lumber that hadn't yet been put in proper storage from the human caravan. But it was the three digging tools that lay near one corner of the depot that concerned him. The terronite and high-steel shovels he recognized. They'd gone out last year to the east, destined for the human tribes of the southern reaches by request. How they came to be here he did not know.

Led let the merchants have plenty of time to unpack after they arrived. It was obvious from their deportment that most weren't happy to be here at all and they held themselves aloof from any of the settlement that came near. No idle banter passed their lips, no exchange of drinks or food. He sighed. Why did it have to be like this? Had they chosen to worship a god or goddess of Fortresses or War they'd have been accepted, even heralded as 'true dwarves', was a goddess of Death so much different? He knew the answer, despite having asked the question to himself. It came down to a lack of understanding. People, dwarves in particular, were unaccepting of change. And Mondul simply didn't fit into their previous theology. It wasn't proper or traditional and therefore it simply wasn't dwarven.

He sighed again before stepping out to greet the merchants.

"Hai, welcome."

Etud spat on the ground next to him and did not take the proffered hand.

"Let's get this over with."

Led let the slight pass and examined the goods they'd brought. Much was useful, and they'd be able to afford almost all of it. Thanks largely to the Avarii who'd brought much, but due to circumstances, left with much much less.

The bars would be good, and even some of the gemstones they'd brought could be put to good use. The drink would always be welcome to help provide variety and the food as well, though their larder was nearly full. Perhaps he'd have a second one dug beneath the first. It never hurt, and should it come to a siege they'd want to be well prepared.

The caravan had even brought some steel armor, and as much of it would be purchased as possible, all things permitting. The lack of flux in the area made making steel a difficult task.

In exchange they'd provide the stone crafts that had been made in abundance as well as the goods and clothing the Avarii had left behind in their passing.

Almost casually out of the blue the merchant turned to him.

"Out of curiosity, where'd ye get the shovels there from?"

Led looked up from his perusal. "Oh, those? The elves from Micele Fidale brought them this spring. Strange thing for them to have, so we figured we'd buy them."

The merchant said nothing, and only grunted slightly.

Led handed him a list of the goods and values tallied that he was willing to trade and Egul looked it over before nodding and sighing. Officially there was little he could do at this point. Denying trade at such large profit margins might get him fired, as might defying the King's orders to permit trade. But accepting brought him no great joy. They'd not be making quick time on the way south anymore.

The bloody cultists had sold him two full wagonloads of rough stone.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 28, 2009, 06:33:59 pm**

Late Autumn

Glacies wiped her forehead and rubbed her now-dirty forearm on her skirt. She'd been putting in double time since accepting the task of Head-Mason from the High priest. The insight she'd gained from making the felsite coffer served her well and she quickly found that she was easily the fastest mason there. It took the others four to five times as long to hew out blocks as her, and with her skill Thesaurusaurus had comissioned furniture to be provided. That task fell to her exclusively and she was given little, other than those tasks to do. It left her much time to think, perhaps too much at times.

A tap on her shoulder startled her out of her thoughts and she saw Led standing behind her. She turned to him after setting her hammer and chisel down on the workbench and dusting her herself off a tad.

"Aye?"

"I thought it was time we had a little chat, now that you've had some time to think things over. When's a good time?"

"I've got this order of tables and thrones to fill, and some odds and ends after that, but I suppose I can make time."

"Good, I..."

Thesaurusaurus can rushing through the door and looked relieved when he saw them.

"Sir, the Avarii, they've gone boulders again!"

Led sighed and shook his head slightly.

"Very well, what's the situation."

"Same as normal, except their animals went bezerk instead, killed a few of them and scattered their loads across the peak. From what I heard there are two mules left. Both crazy, one to the north and one to the south-east."

"Alert the Hound..."

Glacies put her hand on his arm. "Let me. We've got armor to go around now. I can handle two crazed animals, surely."

Kolok voice could be heard from the workshop next door. "Oi, then I'ma goin' too. I love mules."

Glacies looked at Led as if asking to be sent alone, but Led shook his head.

"He's right, it's best we send two, just in case."

Glacies grumbled to herself as she stood at the top of the hill looking northwards. Kolok hadn't arrived yet and was still gearing up, much to her dismay. This was the first chance she'd had in months for any sort of action and she wasn't about to let some carpenter show her up. Her steel chainmail clinked as she moved and the weight of her armor and shield made her feel solid. The fire-hardened ashen shortsword in her hand gleamed from it's polished surface and it was evident it'd never been used. She smiled to herself as she took a deep breath of the warm afternoon air.

Kolok's heavy tread brought her wheeling around.

"It's about time you get here. I've been waiting for hours."

He merely shrugged. "Needed a drink first."

Hefting his axe he started loping off to the north, Glacies eagerly trying to keep pace aboveground with his long strides. Up ahead they could see the mule, braying wildly near the corpse of his former avarii master. Blood coated it's hooves and flecks of grey and white tissue clung to it's matted fur. A wild look was in it's eyes and they were wide open and bloodshot.

It scented them somehow and turned towards them in time to have Kolok charge into it. The sturdy creature barely budged as the not-quite-so-sturdy woodcutter bounced off, landing on his rump on the ground. In a flash it wheeled and kicked out, catching Kolok on the side of the head with one hoof, caving in his helmet slightly. The dwarf's head snapped back painfully and he flopped down momentarily.

Glacies for a second was awestruck by the speed and ferocity of the beast and concern for Kolok and herself came a split-second later, but she could see him breathing still and by the time she'd closed the distance he was already shaking his head, trying to clear it as the mule tried to trample him. He rolled away in time as Glacies lunged with her sword, scoring a shallow cut along the left flank. The angle was bad, however, and it didn't cut much deeper than the thick hide.

Kolok came to his feet in a flash as the donkey came down again, nearly on top of him, biting out with it's teeth. In a reactionary move he brought his axe up and pushed out with it, landing a glancing blow flatwise on the donkey's head. Glacies struck out again with her sword, stabbing at a leg but missing. Kolok's next swing caught the donkey in one of the front legs, and the sudden absence of it sent the donkey sprawling on the ground.

The prone donkey tried to lash out with it's legs, connecting several times as the dwarves stabbed and cut into it, but never with enough force to get past the steel armor. Kolok's final stroke to the chest killed the beast, named Heatedstabbed in the Avarii tongue and the pair of them stood, breathing heavily in the sunshine.

Glacies looked sideways at Kolok.

"You ok?"

He merely shook his head as if to clear the pain and grunted.

"One more."

They took off jogging, Kolok going somewhat slower this time as they headed towards the south. They saw a small group of zombie mountaingoats, grazing on non-existant grass but left them well enough alone. The second mule was found on the southern slopes and charged them as they approached.

Glacies advanced first and had more sense now. She approached more slowly and so was able to almost avoid the massive kick as it turned and lashed out behind it. Still, it connected on her thighs and rocked her back on her heels, denting her plate greaves. Kolok circled to the other side and they began the battle in earnest.

The pair was more cautious this time, however and as soon as the mule turned on Kolok, Glacies struck out with her sword, cleanly severing the tail of the creature, along with portion of one flank. Kolok's next swing took the head cleanly off. And so ended the life of Fealtyplaited, the mule.

As they trotted back to camp Glacies looked over at Kolok from the side. To her horror she noticed that the hoof had crushed the helmet in such a way that it destroyed Kolok's right eye. And he favored his neck as well on the return. Her own injuries were not insignificant and just walking pained her. Was this what the Hound did? She had a hard time justifying her mild disdain towards him now that she'd witnessed death and injury up close. But it didn't deter her, instead she steeled herself against her emotions and comitted herself to the path she had begun.

Turning to Kolok she had to ask, "I thought you said you liked mules."

He shrugged. "I do. Always have. Saw a bit o' myself in them. Can't abide the thought of them wandering about these hills mad like that. Better to put them down."

She shook her head, guesturing vaguely towards his head.

"And after that do you still like them?"

Kolok looked at her, blood trailing down the side of his ruined face, and gave a crazy grin.

"Oh, aye. I like 'em for their stubbornness."

<div>Quote from: Paulus Fahlstrom on May 28, 2009, 06:33:59 pm</div> <div>The sturdy creature barely budged as the sturdy woodcutter bounced off</div>
--

A sturdy sentence, my good man!

Also, I like the take on mule-loving.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 28, 2009, 08:52:16 pm**

((heh... good catch. I've amended the sentence. Let the original stand in it's quoted glory.

And my apologies Kolok, I don't know what it is but I'm beginning to think you're cursed. You've suffered a neck wound and lost an eye. We don't need woodcutters or carpenters that much, especially with your legendary carpentry skills you crank things out fast. I'll work on training you up in civilian duties (like pumping) and will just have to get you your military experience the fun way. Actual combat.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 29, 2009, 11:13:52 am**

Early winter, 10, Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

Things progress well here of late. Despite the multiple appearances of Insectoid and goblin ambushes on the slopes around us only one group actually made it to our cavern undiscovered. The others held back rather than attack once they were spotted. A tactically wise move on their part. Which has me concerned.

If I didn't know better I'd almost say that the roaming undead were protecting us. What an absurd notion.

The mining work on The temple goes well, far ahead of the masonry which is, by nature, more time consuming. Ragnar asked if she could go mine some fun things and since Pete, Oddbodd and Sarah have been clamoring for some metal to work with now that the forges are running I see no reason not to. Just east of our peak was a mixed iron/gold vein. The iron vein appeared to be larger but after Ragnar had her fun there I was pleasantly surprised it was not so. We'll get almost sixty bars out of the gold vein and only about twenty or so from the iron. Ragnar also uncovered a sizeable pocket of yellow zircon near the end of the gold vein and managed to bring out several large chunks of rough gemstone.

That this area has such abundant and rich mineral veins littering the surface makes me wonder what we can do with the uncovered veins. I'll have to ask around to see what the others think we can do with the space.

We've caught three more tigermen thieves in our traps and I think we'll have time to install at least one of them above and get it linked before Led is ready for the official ground-breaking ceremony. Glacies and her crew have been working hard on making blocks and as soon as the ceremony is over we'll begin construction on the walls.

I'll have to keep my eyes open during the ceremony to see who might make suitable candidates to have trained for military duty, or rather double duty, as with so few bodies we need as many as possible for civilian jobs when not otherwise engaged.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **May 30, 2009, 06:38:30 am**

((oh wow, i made some Armour, that's pretty cool. Shame it was brass though. Does this mean that i'm the chief armoursmith now?))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 30, 2009, 11:46:12 am**

((Actually, it's perfect it's Brass. That leads me into the story line I've been wanting for Oddbodd. Unfortunately it was a possession. I've left hints in the post for a future direction to take it into though. So no skills. But yeah, you're our only armorsmith anyways.))

28th of Obsidian



"My friends and fellow followers of Mondul!"

Led's voice rang out over the rush of the wind. The snow and ice gave the scene a pristine look, but the upper peak had been scoured clean by the wind.

"We are here to dedicate this site to our goddess and the construction of her Temple."

The eight prisoners glanced at each other nervously, with exception of the Tigerman, who remained unmoving in his cage, as if in meditation. Most of the prisoners were goblins. Three were thieves and two of the others were from the patrol, the axegoblin squad leader among them.

"This is not only a dedication but a trial, of them." He pointed towards the prisoners.

And then somewhat quieter, "And of us."

The dwarves looked at each other nervously. They knew what would happen, but this was to be their first trial. For some perhaps their last. But they knew the doctrine by now. Death was not to be feared, it was to be embraced. And only by facing death would they know life, only by overcoming death in the short term would life become worth living, and Death become more real to them. Thesaurusaurus stood next to his son, Led, newly come of age. The lad seemed eager, anticipatory.

"Then let us dedicate this holy site my brothers and sisters. At this time, the dying of the year in the season of death do we begin."

The lever was pulled and as if on cue the cages sprang open.

Pandemonium ensued. The thieves had their weapons still, few dwarves had anything but their fists, but they outnumbered the thieves and soldiers almost two to one. Only the Hound, Glacies and the High priest had weapons, and one or two of the miners, Sarah among them.

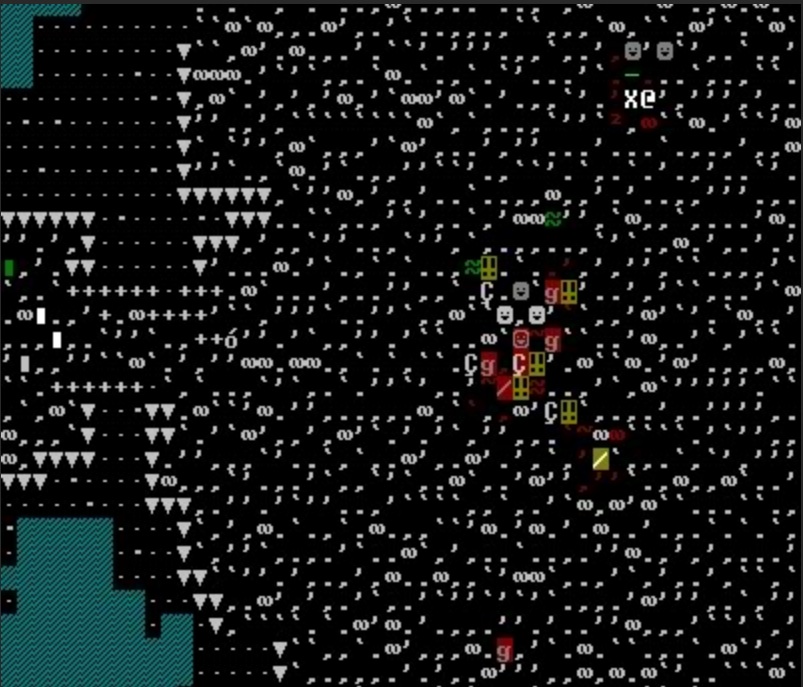
Several of the thieves were jumped upon and others tried to flee. The Tigerman sprang into action as soon as his cage was open, and so swift was his movement that none could catch him. None others escaped. The axegoblin and one other nearly managed to break free. Sarah put her pick into the wrestlers leg while the young Led jumped at the axe goblin, who stood his ground and attacked back, cutting into the dwarfs leg.

On the other side of the site the Hound lay into prisoners with abandon, smacking them around and helping others who had them pinned. Led stood nearby, pinning a goblin to the ground with his spear.

It ended quickly and the followers of Mondul gathered quickly again in a circle. Two gaps in the circle were left for the fallen. Onol, and the young Led, slain by the axegoblin as he strove with him. Thesaurusaurus and Sarah were visibly distraught.

Led spoke out again then.

"It is sufficient. Mondul has visited this place now. Let us care for the dead with proper dignity. Places of rest and glory have been prepared for them below in the Crack. Let us celebrate their passing, even as we mourn our own loss."



All witnessed Death.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **May 30, 2009, 12:21:31 pm**

nice ritual scene, but now I've lost that I never knew I had. :-\

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 30, 2009, 07:20:18 pm**

((Aye, it was a shame at that. To be honest I didn't even know he was your son until after the battle and you became Unhappy. Being attacked, losing a son to tragedy and witnessing death apparently does that.

If it makes you feel better this wasn't your son that had made the artifact. And I've designated an area in the Crack as your family tombs. Boink's working on spiffing it up as we speak. Well, kinda. (Not really. Game's not running right now.)

Speaking of Boink, she'll be the subject of the next post.

Oh, and these rituals will become annual affairs. Only cultists may participate. Gotta do something with the thieves and it helps advance the military storyline I've got planned with Ragnar and Kolok as well. Not to mention all the other military dwarves. Khain and Draconius you'll be up next too.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 01, 2009, 02:43:37 pm**

7th of Granite Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

Spring-time in the mountains changed little. The snow still swirled around the peak above as Paulus tramped down the hillside, stamping his feet on the ground to dislodge the snow from his clothing. Clean-up after the ritual was a somewhat somber affair for some but it was just work for him. What Led had been thinking not arming the followers beforehand he didn't know. The prisoners had retained their weapons. Still, there was time to persuade him otherwise for next year. There was always much to do, that at least never changed.

Tramping down the smoothed entry hall into the second hall he smiled slightly as he headed into the third hall, the dining area. Fre's work was well complemented here, with magnificently carved stone furniture, all rough spots polished out and the surfaces curved and gleaming. Glacies had done well on these in her spare time and Led had decorated them using the remains of the very hall itself. It seemed to make sense to decorate the dining hall in turtle, shad, bream, heron and swan bones, the white providing a nice contrast.

Several dwarves sat in the hall already, relaxing with their food and drink obtained from the basement below. One he wanted to speak to sat, solitary in the corner table. He headed below and pulled himself a shot into a large mug before heading up, pulling a chair over to dwarf.

She was still in the middle of eating a swan roast, spiced with prickleberry seed and ground sunberry, another of Fre's magnificent creations. She nodded cordially as she chewed, but somewhat hesitantly. He sipped his rum while he waited for her to finish chewing and smiled appreciatively.

"Looks good."

She smiled and waved her fork in his direction. "Aye, it is." Her smiled faded in an instant. "Touch it and you're hand'll be next."

He chuckled appreciatively, raising his mug. "Aye, Fre's work's like that. Don't worry, I'm just here to soothe a parched throat."

She perked up again immeadiately. "You're the Hound right?"

He nodded.

"Pete tells me you're the one to talk to if I want to change professions."

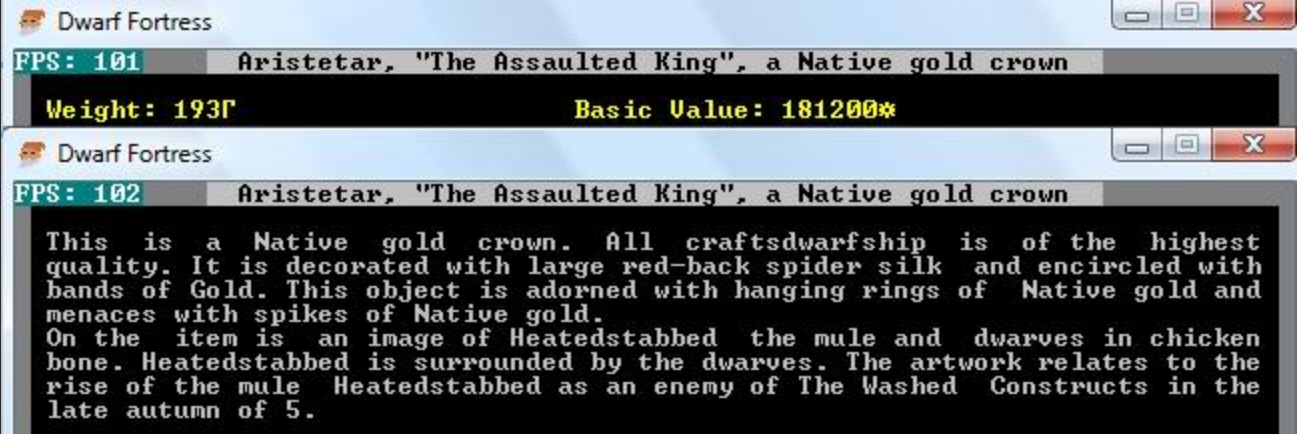
Paulus shrugged non-committally. "What were you wanting to do?"

"I've always wanted to be a metalworker. Smelting and forging. Yup. It's what me ma used ta do back in the Homes. Da was in the guard and died in the wars, lost ma on the crossing. Been wandering since then."

Paulus nodded. She wasn't a follower of Mondul he knew. But where she'd come from and why had been one of the things he wanted to speak to her about. That and Pete had mentioned that she could use a little more help in the forges now that they were running.

A sudden disturbance interrupted his thoughts. Boink burst through the doors, looking parched and famished but carrying a large red-backed spider silk bundle in her hands. Seeing him she staggered over plopping it down on the table.

"Paulus, there you are. Keep an eye on this for me. I need a drink, bad.", before dashing off. He shook his head and unwrapped the bundle.



Her magnificent creation lay on the silk, slender and beautiful in it's gleaming glory. The native gold stone she used had been engraved with small square panels, perfect and symmetrical and set in them with the stone background serving as scenery, boulders and landscape inclusive she'd set the glorious battle of Kolok and Heatedstabbed in chickenbone. The first panel showed the slaying of the avarii by the mule, the second Kolok being struck and losing his eye, then a battle scene with Kolok and Glacies fighting and finally with Kolok striking the mule down in the final panel. Inset into it to pad the stone was soft silk which had been worked into other areas as well to provide a soft contrast. Pure gleaming gold bands circled above the engraved scene as well as below. The top of the crown was properly spiked using the same unbroken piece of native gold and small gold rings hung down a few finger widths below it.

Khain looked upon it dumbfounded, awestruck and almost worshipful. (Look at what she's fond of. ;))

Boink bounced back up the stairs, giddy and happy as she drank deeply from a frothy mug of dwarven beer.

"I've got to send a letter to Uncle Crush, he'll be impressed. Oooh...that looks tasty. I have to see if there's any left. Oh, and I'd better hurry, I wanted to see the ritual."

Paulus paused for a second.

"Boink ... it's almost mid Granite. That happened nearly two weeks ago."

She looked momentarily crestfallen before smiling and scooping up her treasure in her free hand. "I'd guess I'd better go see how it went then. I've got soooooooo much to do now. I think this place could use some spiffing up. Perhaps I'll decorate the walls once I get some time."

She left in a whirlwind of motion and speech, leaving Khain her mouth slightly agape. Paulus turned back to her.

"So, we were saying."

"... that was the most impressive ... thing I think I've ever seen."

"Hmmm? Oh, yes, Boink did very well. We were talking about your career."

"Yes, I ..." she looked longingly towards the empty doorway.

"I agree. Feel free to report to Pete. She'll be your supervisor. Perhaps she'll even let you do some of the armorwork we'll be needing since she'll be busy with the weapons."

She nodded again.

"Thanks."

Paulus shrugged again, removing his mug from the table and working his way across the hall towards someone else already.

((You're profile below Khain.))

[Spoiler \(click to show/hide\)](#)



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **June 01, 2009, 03:52:43 pm**

((Was it a posession or fey?

Also, yes!! Super valueable crown. The king must somehow be forced to wear it when he arrives)).

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **June 01, 2009, 10:04:01 pm**

I guess Heatstabbed truly was a kingly mule.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 02, 2009, 07:28:04 am**

((It was a fey mood, so yes, you're now a legendary Engraver. We've actually had a rash of Artifacts, most of them very cool and nicely story-line appropriate.))

Cont'd from previously

Paulus didn't have far to look. Iton, the fisherdwarf sat on the other side of the third hall, intently observing something that the Hound couldn't see. Until he got closer. The dwarf sat on a chair, very still and stared at the corpse of a dead chicken lying on the floor.

"You do that?"

He started, surprised. "Me? No, I was just in here taking a break when I saw the chicken just fall over and die. Near as I can make out it died of old age."

The Hound raised an eyebrow, but let him continue speaking.

"I've can't ever recall seeing something die of old age. It's fascinating. I imagine it must be the same for us."

"I see. I came to speak with you for a reason."

"What then can I do for Mondul?"

"We'll be putting together a military here shortly. I want you in it. You were the only unarmed dwarf at the ritual who managed to cause death among the prisoners without a weapon."

She smiled slightly, as if relishing the thoughts that sentence invoked.

"I would be honored. If I might though, now that I've been reborn in Mondul's glory I'd like to be given a new name."

"That being?"

Her grin became fierce. "Draconius, that, like a dragon, I may strike fear into the hearts of our foes and sow death among them."

"So you shall be called then. You are to report to..." he paused. Paulus had been about to say Ragnar, but with her recent bouts of drinking and self-depreciation he wasn't sure she would want the task.

"Kolok. Report to Kolok. He's been trained well enough and by those that had skill. He will be overseeing the training of the military even if he will not be participating."

"The unbeliever?"

Paulus shook his head. "He's one of the better trained. Glacies will be your squad leader in combats for now. Your civilian duties are NOT to be neglected either."

She seemed to accept the decision once she realized that Glacies would be her immeadiate superior and went back to observing the dead chicken.

Spoiler (click to show/hide)



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 02, 2009, 08:33:14 am**

Mid-Spring

The outpost liason rubbed his temple again, trying vainly to soothe out the headache he felt. There were things afoot in the nation that few, other than the king and his closest advisors, knew. But one he could tell. Relations with several of the other races were quickly becoming strained. Displacing an entire nation was not a simple affair, and moving that nation to another location with a pre-established power structure was a quick way to setting off a war.

A war they didn't need. But that seemed likely to come anyways. That the goblins would be their enemies they did not doubt. The insectoids as well, they were just too different. But there were many others that were enigmas as of yet. Rumors of an evil fortress to the south had reached their ears, but, as of yet, none had record of relations with the Chaos lords. On the other side, the Avatars and Avarii were equly difficult to deal with. That had been one of the reasons he'd been sent to Geshud Osod. Rumors of Avarii merchants going crazy and dying were disturbing and no one seemed to know why. That alone might be sufficient to spark a war with the xenophobic Avarii.

The elves were a new problem as well. The elves of this place were different, more savage, not less. And there had always been precious little trust of the elves. And the stories coming out of Onol Lened were not reassuring. Neither were the reports from the merchants guild that caravans were just disappearing in elven lands, their goods showing up months or years later among elven merchants. The King had authorized him to examine the situation here as well, where reports of dwarven goods being peddled by elves had also surfaced.

Perhaps that was where the headache had come from. The elves had shown up a week or two ago, carrying a bar of Celestrium and an ornate copper shovel. The bar had the stamp of Saintorb, the capitol of their cousins and allies of Zilirezum. Such metal was never sold to elves.

He'd been given authorization from the King to make a decision on the matter and convey it to the outpost leaders he'd meet with. There was some concern about whether the cultists would even cooperate, but he'd found them amenable. He didn't want to be responsible for the actions that might lead to war, but from his perspective it seemed as if the elves were almost asking for one by siezing caravans.

"Very well, Led. I've made my decision. From this time forth you are authorized by King Tosid to henceforth sieze and retain all good of potentially dwarven origin."

Led nodded. There was no reason he shouldn't trust the liason, but something in the back of his mind warned him that this might be a manipulation. A reason that could be used against them somehow in the future. But, he reasoned, even the Hound didn't trust the elves.

"It shall be done as the King commands."

((Let's see how patient elves are... heh. Oh, and as repayment for previous goods we've also siezed a tame Black bear.))

Late Spring

Kolok headed north as soon as he stepped out into the comparatively warm spring air. The swamps below in the valley floor were just now beginning to thaw, but the upper hills still lay locked in ice, except where the sun struck directly. Passing the site of his and Glacies battle with Heatedstabbed he looked again proudly at the site of battle. They were finally going about clean-up, gathering the bleached bones and goods that the mule had been carrying.

It was perhaps a surprise then that once they got to the location he found himself surrounded. Not by other dwarves coming to help carry goods, though there was one of the cultist just behind him, but by a goblin patrol, examining the site. The leader of the squad and his second both carried iron whips, with braided pieces of stone and bone woven into the tips. The other goblins were poorly equipped and all bore signs of repeated scourging. But seeing him they broke into fierce grins and quickly moved to surround him.

Blinking quickly, Kolok unfastened his axe in a flash, holding it before him. He could see only a few of them and knew that others could easily be sneaking up on him from his blind side. Kolok's bull was lumbering up behind him with another dwarf and it was they that interrupted the scene. Had it only been himelf Kolok might have attacked then and there, but with his beloved pet and another dwarf at stake he made a tactical choice, rather than a strategic one. Turning, he shouted, "Ambush! Make a run fer it."

The pair of dwarves turned, with the bull following bellowing loudly as one of the lasher struck it and began driving it to the east.

Stumbling over the rough terrain he shook his head. They'd never outdistance them like this.

"Split up!" Kolok shouted as he veered off to the south-east and drawing three of the five remaining goblins after himself.

After only a short ways he grinned, in spite of it. Turning on his heels suddenly, and lashing out with his axe at the goblin pursuing him, Kolok knocked him to the ground, stunning him. Before the other two goblins could respond he brought his axe crashing down, crushing the goblin's chest. The goblin squad leader shook out his whip while the other moved to flank, closing in to grappling range. It was he that bore the brunt of Koloks wrath and although the goblin managed to trip him up and bring him to the ground, allowing his leader to lash out viciously, drawing blood on Kolok's leg the goblin quickly realized that being attached to ten stone weight of pissed off dwarf was a bad thing. Kolok's off-handed punch sent the goblin reeling and the follow-up with his axe severed the goblins head cleanly.

It was either stupidity or courage that made the goblin leader stay and fight but after knocking a few feeble attacks aside Kolok severed his arm and shortly thereafter cut him cleanly in half.

Only by reaching down and pulling aside the tattered pants leg did he realize the extent of his wounds. He wouldn't be bed-ridden unless they got infected, but chasing after more goblins was out of the question. He needed rest.

Draconius had been going to help carry things in as well, and the Hound had been walking with her when the alarm had been sounded. Only a few seconds later ahead and below them they could see Fikod being chased by a pair of goblins. Iton waved to her, getting the frantic dwarf's attention and pointed to a spot directly below them.

The goblins were not gaining on her, she could outrun at least one of them easily. But the other, he was quick, and outpacing him would be impossible. It was with no small relief that Fikod saw the two dwarves on the slope ahead and she smiled. She simply ran straight, weaving through the trees and doing her best to keep the goblins' attention on herself. Shortly after she passed the designated spot she heard muted shouts and two thuds. Turning, she found Draconius and the Hound each locked in battle with goblins. She went to help her friend, leaving the hound to fend for himself.

Charging in she almost caught the goblin by surprise but he managed to dodge to one side, kicking her in the leg in the process. Draconius struck out at him but again he managed to deflect the blow, catching only a glancing hit to the torso. The goblin, grinning, kicked some snow and dirt into Draconius' eyes, tackled her, grabbing her wrist and starting to force it behind her. In defense she cried out and kicked behind her but was unable to break the hold. Fikod tackled the pair and soon the three descended into a mess of kicking, biting and punching.

And just as suddenly they separated, the goblin rolling to one side breathing heavily. The Hound struck then, flying out to tackle the creature from behind a tree. They rolled for a second but when they came up the goblin was in a headlock. Grabbing his chin the Hound swiftly snapped it to one side and pushed forward, dropping the dead goblin to the ground.

He cocked his head to one side as the two others caught their breath. "You two ok?"

Fikod nodded, rubbing a few sore spots, and the Hound dashed off up the hill.

Stukod grumbled as she walked back towards where she had left the others. She could pick up the trail from there. That cursed bull had been too swift for her to catch and she'd never gotten close enough to wrap her whip around it's leg to trip it up.

She spat on the ground when before her appeared another dwarf, apparently looking for something. She smiled. At least her time hadn't been wasted. An unarmed dwarf was a good target, even it was covered in tattered clothing. Her first hint that something was wrong came when he saw her. No sign of fear showed on his face as she closed and lashed out with her whip. He caught it on his arm as the barbed iron whip caught his flesh and tore into it. She smiled, but it quickly faded when he grabbed the whip with his other hand and yanked... hard. She fell forward as she let go of the weapon and the last sight she saw was his massive fist coming down on the side of her head.

((Congrats Kolok, you're now

Kolok Creviccloisters the Circumstantial Crypt of Singing (Don't ask me... even I can't come up with something for a name like that.)

Paulus Chancesyrups is known as The Rumored Symmetry

Expect a few rapid fire posts here this week, as I've got a bit of time on my hands in the evening, since I'm out of town at a work-related conference.))

I am looking this topic for a long time now I found it.,Am really right that the topics and the content of it will be a big help.,

Furnace Filter (http://www.iaqsource.com/furnace_filters.php)

this is awesome, need to read the rest of the story though

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 03, 2009, 09:46:40 am**

Early summer, Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

More and more now I'm convinced that we're going to need some sort of standing military. It's just so stone-breaking difficult when every person is needed for other tasks. At least we're building our stockpile of weapons and armor, even if most of the weapons are copper or wood. Kolok has an iron axe, I have my steel hammer. Everything else is somewhat inferior. Good practice weapons to be certain, but not ideal for combat.

The Avarii have come and gone again, and I was half tempted to escort them out, just to avoid the problems of having them threaten our people when they go crazy. It must be something about the area that disrupts them somehow. The mountains certainly feel as if they have some sort of taint. Almost like it's cursed land somehow.

The insectoid ambush that happened just last week did nothing to help the situation we are in either. The human caravan had just arrived when a small insectoid patrol intercepted them. Thankfully there were no serious losses, but the merchants were driven off and unable to come trade this year. Our supplies are more than sufficient for the few dwarves that live here. We won't run out of drink for five years, to be sure.

Still, it all brings me back to my earlier comments. We need a standing military to help escort caravans and hunt down enemy patrols. And I fear we lack the population to have more than just two or three. Any more and our labors on Mondul's temple will be massively disrupted. We've begun work on the upper walls and already we've burned through nearly all our appropriate blocks. We may have to resort to using orthoclase for the flooring, which would be all right, but simply unacceptable for the walls.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 03, 2009, 02:15:52 pm**

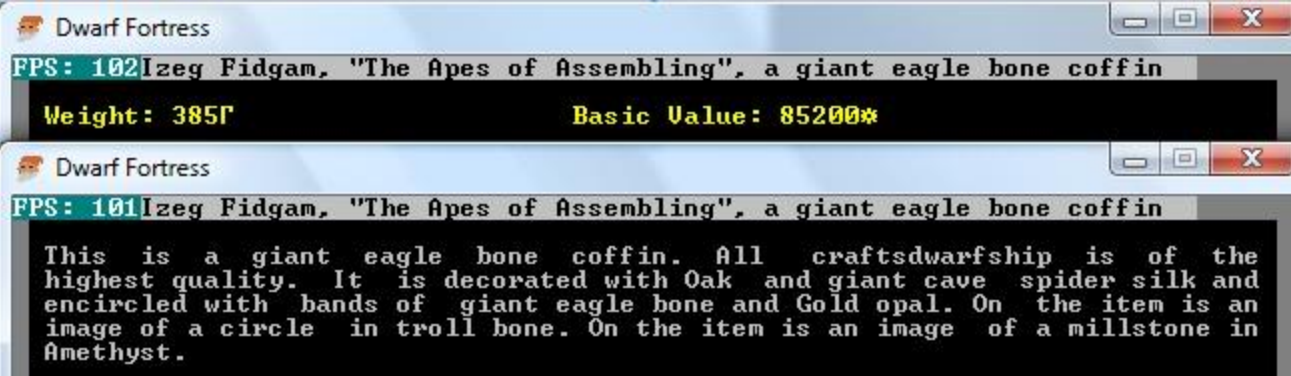
Led was up above on the slope in the heat of the afternoon sun. Waves of heat danced off the exposed rock face as he surveyed the lands around them. Smallish patches of snow were still visible where the sun rarely struck but other than that the valley below was verdant and lush, full of life, while up on the hills it seemed to him they were the only living things. All else was dead, or reanimated dead.

He stood on the raised wall of the nearly completed level. There remained much to be done, truth be told, for it to be finally finished, some now, and some when the finishing touches would need to be put on. The masons were still bringing up blocks from below. He'd been down there a half hour before. The stockpiles were dwindling fast. They were simply using the blocks much faster than they could be produced. That was to be expected he supposed.

It was as he stood there contemplating what this meant to them that suddenly the heavens opened to his view and Mondul stood before him in her glory. Her nightcloak had been cast aside in the light and in it's place she wore a blazing cloak of brilliant white light, so that it obscured almost all of her features. Her body was wrapped in light and he was forced to squint to make out her face, but as he did so he could see her smiling.

"For your labors, Led, I bestow upon you a gift. A gift and a protection. May it serve you well until I call you to my side, to labor with me on this side."

He awoke later, in the dark, a single horse tallow candle guttering in it's holder. He recognized his workshop, where he carved bones in glory to Mondul. Turning he could see the gift his Lady had bestowed upon them. And though he knew that he himself crafted it with her knowledge he could not remember the process at all. It seemed a mysterious thing to him, but such a gift was not lightly given, nor received, if one were wise. He would have to think how best to ... utilize it.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 04, 2009, 08:19:40 am**

Early Autumn

The face of the mountain as the liason and caravan approached was visibly changing. What it would become they were not sure, only the barest of walls graced the top but the extensive mining below indicated that it would likely be a large structure, embedded firmly into the native rock of the mountain itself.

Tekkud looked over at the merchants and saw many of them scowling as they approached and forced himself not to smile. He'd been given specific instructions from the King himself to observe that trade functioned reasonably well. Both of them knew that trade was the life-blood of a kingdom and that if they could not trade with others there would be little reason to produce trade goods. Which would cause massive unemployment, and loss of income, reducing their military potential and in general weakening their nation in many ways.

The scheming of nobles concerned him less than the true reasons for him coming there. Relations continued to sour with the elves. Following their proclamation regarding dwarven made goods the elves had siezed three caravans. There were no known survivors and though their own merchants continued to trade away dwarven goods there was an accepted tit-for-tat exchange happening. Not only that but a war patrol of the winged humans, the avarii, had been spotted travelling cautiously northwards. Such a patrol had never been seen before and it did not bode well.

While the merchants rolled in Tekkud made his way in and down to find Led. They'd known each other for a few years now and though he never felt truly comfortable in the self-proclaimed 'High Priest's' presence, he knew that the cultists were still loyal to the crown. The nobility were another matter, one of the main reasons that he had persuaded the king to not allow general immigration to this place. Allowing nobility to come here would exacerbate the problem greatly and he had little doubt that some would wind up dead from it. Such schisms could well cause a civil war, an unthinkable danger at a time like this.

"Greetings from the Mountainhome."

Led nodded slightly.

"Be welcome here then. We have food and drink aplenty. Rest yourself a while and we can meet at your convenience."

It was three days before he managed to find time to meet with the High Priest again, but he was able to speak at length with the head clerk and go over the outpost records. He was also very favorably impressed with some of the workdwarfship being put out. The artifacts that had been created were, of particular note, and many were quite valuable. He even took a rubbing of the magnificent golden crown

that had been made, as well as making a sketch of it. It's presence alone helped relieve his mind. They'd found gold here and in sufficient abundance, he guessed, to use it in raw form as well as bars. That was good The kingdom's coffers had been drained and the King and his advisors had been discussing imposing another tax in order to raise funds. All elven goods, or goods claimed from the elves were to be taxed heavily. Fully two thirds the value of those goods should be sent, via the merchants, back to the capitol for use by the kingdom.

He'd also swung by the Depot to view the trading. The cultists had set aside all the bars, some few older pieces of steel armor and some barrels of drink and food from the merchants goods and were bringing up, strangely enough, some cheaply made stone furniture, raw stone in abundance and a few bins of high quality red-backed large spider silk goods. Strangely enough, of apparent Avarii make. The human tribesmen would be happy to trade for those and most of the merchant profits would come from there. The rest, just took up space. It seemed to him that the cultists were dumping unwanted items on the merchants and he said as much to Led when they met again.

"Well, all seems to be in order here. It seems that you've been progressing well in strengthening your position here."

Led smiled, "We do what we can."

"Indeed. It seems to me that relations between you and the merchants are... somewhat strained."

Led shook his head and grew serious.

"Relations between us and the merchants are due almost exclusively to their own bias against us. A bias perpetuated by the nobles and guild to our continued loss."

Tekkud nodded.

"I'll not disagree with you there. But someone must take the first steps towards peace. Why do you not trade with them some of your better goods. That alone would improve your relations somewhat."

"It'll be a sunny day in the accursed Crack before I allow useable and necessary goods to be given, even in exchange with those bloody-handed thieves and bigots."

Tekkud raised his hands. "I understand, but..."

"No," Led grew somewhat angry, standing and pacing the room, "No. We've been hounded and persecuted for our beliefs at the whim of those nobles and guild leaders that feel we are wild-eyed fanatics. Our believers have lost their jobs suddenly, have been forced from their rooms and homes, have ben hunted and killed by mobs led by those likely bribed or paid by those same leaders.

No, there is no But. There can be no reconciliation between us. Not until they publicly apologize and make restitution to us." Led laughed bitterly. "And both of us know that that will never happen."

Tekkud pursed his lips and nodded. He hadn't been overly surprised by this reaction. From what he'd seen it'd been far worse than that in actuality. Rumors and the few secret reports that the King had allowed him to see had long since convinced him of the cultists tenuous position. And considerable pressure was being excercised upon the King by those same nobles even now.

He sighed. "Very well, I won't press the point. I do have quite a bit more work to do for the official report but I'll let you know when I'm ready to meet."

Led nodded. "The end of the year is a busy one for us, but I'll try to make time if I can."

Tekkud nodded and walked out of the barracks where he'd been meeting with Led. He sighed again and began rubbing his head. It would be a long season.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 06, 2009, 03:53:59 pm**

27th of Hematite

Ragnar tossed and turned in her bed. She slept, but fitfully and though the bed was superb, one of Kolok's exceptional pieces of work she was finding it hard to relax. Something was disturbing her dreams and everytime she closed her eyes she saw the same thing. A flaming mountain in the distance, a massive volcano spewing forth lava and ash and rock from it's fiery maw. She would zoom closer until she would be almost above the summit and then she would awake in a sweat.

She'd been dreaming that off and on for nearly six months. She had considered at first that it might be something off in the drink. Some poisonous or hallucenogenic berry that slipped in unnoticed. But she knew Fre was too careful for that, and her assistants, Fath and Der Kartoffel were equally skilled.

She sighed.

Perhaps it was time to face her fears. Time to confront her dreams.

She lay down again, doing her best to relax and tried to keep her mind blank. Almost instantly the image of the volcano appeared, and it was as if she were flying towards it as it grew in her mind. The thought of flying made her somewhat queasy but she resolutely continued until the fiery mountain loomed large in her mind. Great chunks of stone and flame spewed forth as it erupted and she could almost feel the heat and hear the sound of pieces falling around her as she approached the summit.

The heat felt unbearable to her but despite it she forced herself to be calm and in so doing passed through the fiery barrier into the core of the mountain itself. Despite the raging flames she now felt quite cool and even the Magma itself did not touch her. A thrill of excitement tinged her emotions now, she'd never gotten quite so far. Below her in the magma shaft itself she could see a dark spot, untouched by the molten rock around it. She passed through a shimmering dome and touched the ground.

The stone she stood on appeared to be obsidian, but streaks of metals ran through it. The entire surface was polished to a mirror black finish, her own figure reflecting on the surface. Looking at the shape of it, the polished obsidian appeared to be in the image of a mountain and she couldn't help but think it strange to be on a mountain inside a volcano.

Climbing to the top the upper surface was cut perfectly flat and it's surface was an even deeper shade of black. No visible thing could be seen on it except a ring of strange runes around the rim that pulsed slightly in the reddish glow of the surrounding magma.

And then she looked down at her feet.

In the reflection of the stone itself she saw more than she saw on the top. She saw a great ornately carved throne, of some unidentifiable metal. In that chair sat a youth, with penetrating black eyes. She looked up and could see nothing on the surface with her but looking down again she could see the child once more. He smiled at her and inclined his head in her direction.

"Ragnar."

She trembled that he knew her name, as if him speaking it he had gained a measure of power over her and she fell to one knee.

"I am pleased that you have finally answered my call. It is time for me to be reborn into the world and I have chosen you to be an instrument in that process. I have a task for you to do, but I fear you are not quite ready for it."

She remained with her head bowed, speechless.

"I know the doubts in your heart, but you have done well to have come here. As I am to be reborn so shall you be remade. As fire is born from a spark and grows into a mighty flame before fading again into eventual darkness so am I. And you as well. You have burned brightly in the past and have consumed much of your energy, I will now strengthen you that that which has become dim may grow bright once more. Do as I ask and I will reward you. Fail me and your spark shall fail as well and you will be lost to darkness.

What say you."

Ragnar whispered, awestruck. "It shall be as you say, Lord Asen."

He smiled again, boyish features contrasting his eyes, which held her captive.

"Then I shall mark you and brand you mine. I will take you for but a moment that I may show you the way, after that it shall be up to you."

Ragnar looked down at her reflection in the stone and saw the boy-god reach out to touch her shoulder her with a finger. Pain erupted, a burning white-hot sensation and she looked up to see nothing but flowing magma around her.

She sunk into blackness.

When she awoke she saw the gift of her god, and she knew in her mind that the name was a message from Asen to her.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Keita** on **June 06, 2009, 04:17:45 pm**

still top notch as usual Paulus

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 08, 2009, 12:23:29 pm**

28th of Obsidian

"Brothers and Sisters, hear me now at this time! We are gathered together again at this, the dying day of the season of death in honor of Mondul. The Trial of faith is upon us again. Long have we all labored this past year on Her temple and much remains to be done. Let our strength and skill now be tested and let death be felt once again in this place!"



Led's words were met with a grim silence as the followers gripped weapons unfamiliar to them. Copper maces and spears, ashen swords and other assorted weapons graced their hands. A like mismatch of armor was to be had among them, a steel boot here, shield there, some chainmail on yet another. It was better than nothing and though the situation was serious there prevailed a much less concerned mentality than the previous year. They took their life into their own hands, to be sure, as they faced the thieves that had been captured, but this year they'd not taken any actual soldiers in their traps.

The Hound stood behind them and pulled the lever at his feet, grabbing up his Hammer in the process. Even he was not clad in full armor as the cages opened with a clanging 'SHINK' and the prisoners were released. Panicked and in a group they ran away from the dwarves to their front and up the stairs behind them, hoping futilely for some form of escape. They found none. The upper floors were incomplete and no exit was to be found, only through their captors. Led, Glacies and Thesaurusaurus led the charge into the group of thieves, with the others close behind and soon the silence was broken with ragged breathing, the grunt and scream of pain and the sound of feet hitting smoothed stone as they ran.

The one-sided battle continued near the central pillar as a small group of thieves broke free from the rest, two Tigermen and two goblins sprinting for the opening, guarded by a lone dwarf, resting casually against the wall with his steel hammer. Several of the cultists noted their departure, Lor and Thesaurusaurus taking off in chase. One of the goblins was detained by the Hound and struck dead from behind by Thesaurusaurus, who stopped to engage it, but the remaining three fled on. Sprinting to catch up again the chief clerk caught up to one of the tigermen and tackled it, slowing it for long enough for Lor to catch up as well, just outside the perimeter walls. The three struggled savagely, and the two dwarves recieved many deep claw marks but in the end they won out and the beastman lay in pieces against the outer wall.

The other two managed to escape. But that was trivial. The living did not matter on this day. This was the day of dying.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 08, 2009, 02:47:28 pm**

25th of Granite, Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

The calm winter was a nice respite from all the insectoid sightings recently. It let us get much work done, though a vast amount always remains. I suppose that no one was injured during the Trial was an indication that we are doing better, are better equipped and are prepared for trouble. In reality, I fear it is not.

We still lack a cohesive military, though many of the others are becoming more adept at combat. It should be an interesting year, in any case.

I've spoken with the Liason about our 'elf' problem. Of course I did not mention where I'd seen, or fought with them previously. Few, I think, would believe the scene beneath the sands of Onol Lened. Only Fre and I know the truth here and she supports my decision. We've been given permission to repatriate goods that may have been taken by the elves, but we're going to take it a step further. I've asked Glacies to make us some gates and Oddbodd has now made a catapult and enough mechanisms.

The cursed demon-tainted elves showed up again, punctually. Predictability is not an asset all the time. While they arrived and were unloading we were busy as well. Oddbodd lay behind a fortification, working on assembling the catapult he'd constructed, while I worked on the gate going through the trade corridor. Further fortifications will be necessary in the future but for now this will be sufficient. I finished just in time for Led to come trade.

Negotiations went well at first. We offered far more than what the goods they'd stolen were worth, but due to the deliberate presence of one of the Avarii wooden idols the elves were, amazingly, offended. How they can eat the fallen and consort with demons but object to the use of a tree boggles even my thoughts.

As they packed up we exited, sealing the doors behind us.

Sealing them in.

The next thing they heard was the sharp Crack of stone striking stone as Oddbodd began practicing with the catapult, directly through the Trade depot structure itself. Disappointingly it seems that such rocks are too easy to predict and evade and, though Oddbodd gained a measure of skill, no damage was done.

They are nonetheless locked within, until they die of madness or starvation. We shall see. It's only what the thieving bastards deserve. They did have the gall to try and sell us a dwaven made Anurite shovel. As if we'd ever let the secret of such forging into any but dwarven hands.

((Oddbodd is now officially an Engineer! And apparently Catapults are worthless for friendly-fire hits. Sigh. Looks like it's time to make a ballistae!))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **June 08, 2009, 03:02:04 pm**

Make sure to add a collection ditch on the opposite side so you don't lose the bolts! Also: Hurrah for killing elves!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 08, 2009, 10:19:50 pm**

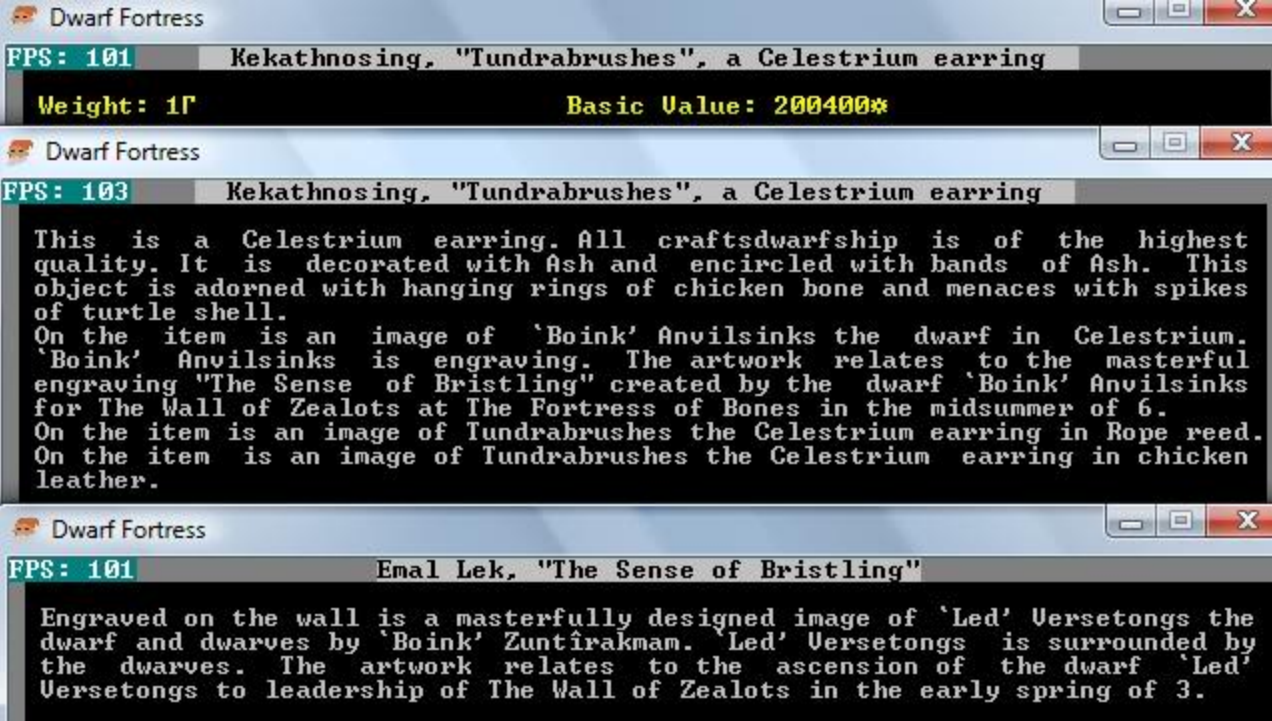
((Hmmm... didn't know you could do that. Consider it done. I hate losing good Steel to ballistae bolts.))

Mid-spring

Fikod set her mug down on the table in the dining hall, her rum sloshing slightly but not a drop leaving his mug. To be honest she preferred the bright orthoclase of the long bar itself to the tables and the higher backed stools that Glacies had made complimented it well. Of course, Led, their own High Priest had worked on decorating each piece of furniture in the room, customizing each item and occasionally throwing in scenes from the past few years. The engravings on the walls were truly superb however, and it was always these that drew her attention. Boink had worked alongside her for considerable time until her creation had shown her to be a superior engraver. It was she that had been allowed to decorate the entire dining hall, as well as that portion of the third hall that had been carved out.

It occurred to her then that there was no reason that she too could not create such works of art. A thought grew in her mind as she drank and stared at the carvings that surrounded her, and leaving her drink half-finished she stood and headed for the nearest craftsduarf workshop.

It would have to be an exquisite piece to compare to the magnificent crown that Boink had made, but it needed to display her own talents as well as the reflec the glory of their church. She entered the fifth hall, the craftshall and saw the stone that would be perfect. Grabbing one of the pieces of celestrium ore she took up residence and began working on her creation.



It took much longer that she could possibly have imagined but when she was finally done it WAS magnificent. It's name she drew from the dry surroundings to the north-east. They'd travelled briefly through a magnificent tundra on their way here from Shieldhelms. It had impressed her, as had Boink's obvious work. But when she saw perfect duplicates on either side of the teardrop shaped earring it made her beam with pride. On the outside in ropereed was a 3/10 scale image of itself in ropereed, but as seen from the inside. On the inside was the same image in similar fashion but worked in chicken leather. Inside each of those were further 1/10 scale images depicting the original side again and inside those even smaller ones, almost too small to make out.

((Yup, it's doubly iterative. Silly dwarves. And I included the engraving by Boink that is depicted on the earring.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 09, 2009, 01:31:12 pm**

(*Paulus is hit by the spinning grammatical error but is unharmed*

Seriously, Tiagoriver81, I don't even know where to begin to make fun of you.)

12th of Felsite, 11

Quico Lizardgale sat next to his friend on the sandy part of the stone cube the dwarves had left them to rot in. They'd been trapped for nearly two months now, and though they had food sufficient for their needs their supply of drink had long since been exhausted. The only drink remaining was a barrel of dwarven ale that had been left in the Depot by their captors, for whatever reason. And it had been brewed in a freshly hewn, green tree corpse, a desecration that made him shiver thinking about it.

Their only source of liquid came from a small berry bush that they'd coaxed to life in the nominally moist sand in the south-east corner of their enclosure. And there were seven elves and seven beasts. It was simply not sufficient. Several of the elves had already entered a meditative trance, in order to preserve their energies, but that too could not last forever.

He sighed. Had the dwarves truly been offended that they'd sold them the goods of caravans waylaid by wild beasts and spiders in their jungles? Or did their anger go deeper? It was hard to think like them, hard for him to imagine life under the earth and away from their forests and their essence. The dwarves were not attuned to that essence, could not feel the way of nature. They did not understand the need to conserve, preserve and utilize all of their resources. They buried their dead, entombed in stone or metal. Such waste!

Even here the dwarves could not feel the land they'd settled in, could not know that their fortress lay on a rift in the Force, a plane of battle long locked in struggle between life and death. In the swamps lay life, the mountains death and most of the elves preferred the sandy soil of the east side of the chamber because of it. How could they not feel it? Or worse, had they done it deliberately? Were they allied with the mountain or with the swamps? He did not know.

Cimo gripped him on the arm, shaking him out of his reverie, whispering into his ear.

"Awake, my friend. Famime shows signs of madness. We must act now."

His eyes fluttered open to see Cimo sitting on the ground next to him, her earthen clothing fitting loosely now on her skinny frame. He nodded, sadly, looking at the other elves to see their state. Famime was by far the worst, periodic twitching of one hand betrayed her inner turmoil. He sighed again.

"The young have no sense of perspective."

"Indeed, but nearly three hundred years is hardly young compared to the mortals around us. Still, the others must know."

"Agreed. It is as we have discussed. You must be the one to attune yourself. They will sense your awareness. But move into the corner near the bush, it strikes me as the best place."

She complied, shifting her form silently into the corner and leaning her back against the sandy stone, left hand palm down on the earth. Her right hand traced delicate symbols out onto the sand, the faintest of stirrings on the soil and she sunk deep into meditation.

Quico settled back into a coherent awareness as he heard Famime stir again.

An uncanny howl disturbed the dwarves from their labors and observers were sent to check on the elves as soon as it was realized that they had been the source of the noise.

The scene that greeted them through the fortification slits was a grim one.

Famime Shieldlions the Quiet Tax stalked her prey mercilessly. Already she had slain fully half of their caravan in her madness. Their blood flecked her face where it had splattered her as she crushed the life out of them with her own hands. The animals had sensed the turmoil and death in the air and many still ran, panicked and braying away from their bezerk former friend. A scream rent the air, her own as Famime launched herself at another elf, sitting crosslegged on the stone. They collided and after rolling around for a few seconds Famime came out on top, throttling the other merchant and bashing his head against the stone floor. Moist thuds began echoing through the room as she continued her onslaught.

She'd killed four of her companions, two of the donkeys, two mules and two of the ponies. Only three of her companions were left, her own donkey and two other elves. She howled again, savagely and began advancing on the two remaining elves in the corner. She lunged for Quico's throat but Quico had been attentive. His knee came up sharply, catching Famime in the solar-plexus and his hands struck out like snakes, holding the other and using her momentum to toss her against the wall. Famime struck with considerable force and lay on the floor for a second, stunned. Before she could move again Quico was there, chopping her in the throat swiftly, crushing her esophagus, before pinning an arm behind her. And then all went black.

Quico regretted what he'd been forced to do the moment he had acted. He'd violated the natural law. It was forbidden to kill one's own. The elves did not believe in martial punishment. Those that could not follow the tribe's belief did not belong to the tribe, it was as simple as that. Banishment was absolute. He had killed another, even if in self defense. The natural force had been betrayed and he felt it. He slumped down on the floor next to his fallen brother, tears in his eyes.

Perhaps that was why he did not hear Quico's donkey charging from behind. The death of it's master unhinged it entirely and the one swift kick that Quico recieved killed him nearly instantly.

And so perished Quico Lizardgales, slayer of Famime Shieldlions the Quiet Tax, slayer of her brethren, killed by Eyomecire, Ageslayer the Donkey.

Shortly thereafter Cimo was no more, trampled under the mad donkey's feet.

Led and Glacies stood outside the door leading to the Depot. They'd witnessed the slaughter of the elves by their own. Only one survivor remained.

Ageslayer.

They opened the doors to see the mad creature, rearing and braying shrilly. They circled as the donkey charged. The large creature bowled into Glacies, knocking her down and attempting to trample her, striking her several times in the chest, head and neck before Led managed to force the donkey off with his spear.

Glacies stood quickly, but was still somewhat disoriented as Led fought, striking the donkey in the flank. They struggled and his spear became embedded and would not pull out, so rather than be drug close he let go as Glacies charged back in to confront the deranged donkey. A series of quick strokes left gashes down the creatures chest as it tried to rear up. The few hit the donkey managed to get on Glacies she shrugged off.

Then a final lunge caught the donkey between some ribs, the sword sliding into the chest cavity three quarters of a foot and the donkey shuddered and fell, breathing heavily.

Minutes later Ageslayer was no more, felled by Glacies Boltorbs.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Heron TSG** on **June 09, 2009, 06:29:50 pm**

Damn them horselike beasts!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 09, 2009, 06:52:57 pm**

((No kidding. Our fortress seems to be plagued by nervous system injuries solely due to dealing with bezerk pack animals. Don't worry, I'll still get you combat training, both civilian and actual.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Draconius** on **June 11, 2009, 10:36:20 am**

Wow, I've never seen elf trader killing seem so epic. Well done. :)

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 11, 2009, 10:06:25 pm**

((It was pretty impressive. Famime and her donkey basically took out the whole rest of the caravan. In true dwarven fasion. Tearing them limb from limb and throttling them with her bare hands.))

15 of Hematite Fortress log

Human traders arrived and were shown below. Fortunately cleaning from the elf incident was quick and relatively easy.

They brought a goodly number of metal bars and wood, both items we requested and highly value. They've also brought food, ammo and a number of other useful resources.

We've sold them a goodly portion of the elven goods, as well as several of our own make and design. Also some of the surplus rough stone blocks that have been piling up. The humans don't quarry for stone as much as us and it seems to be a reasonably useful commodity for them.

The tribesmen seem to value weapons and shield, particularly the tall full shields. Theirs are typically made of wood or leather but occasional metal ones are seen.

May be useful to look into trade with them along those lines. Reliable trade partners.

Work progresses in construction, despite setbacks. No avarii caravans yet this year. Perhaps they've decided to avoid us entirely. Thank goodness.

Hound planning further advances into the Cursed Crack, has asked Sarah to take care of initial mining there. Led moved his crafting to the workshop near the crack to help in case of trouble.

Accumulation of metal continues. Plans for metal storage areas underway, along with presumed metalworking hall. Hound will advise on progress.

Food supplies near maximum. Have recommended expanding food storage and have cleared out boneroom behind the second hall.

I've noted an unusual pet among the elven goods siezed. A caged large red-backed spider, 'tamed' by the savages. Possible silk production? Will have to ask around to see if anyone has experience with this.

Fre suggessted a ballistae training ground design that would allow us to 'catch' the spears shot. Consists of a declining angle on target wall with ditch underneath. Will have to consult Oddbodd for specifics and numbers. I'm sure he can work out the details. Don't know where a cook would pick up that kind of information but she seems too competent to be just a cook.

Have asked Hound to take over bookkeeping for a little while so I can help with Mondul's temple. Progress is slower that I'd like and records are essentially up to date. Last entry for now.

-Thesaurusaurus-

((My apologies for the delay. Now that I'm back in town there was significant catching up to do.))

Led hummed a soft dirge to himself as he worked. The boneyard stretched back behind him, organized into piles according to creature type. It was a sizeable collection and he was doing his measured best to keep it in check, at least when there wasn't other things to take him away from his labors. It felt good to work bone, it always did, and he found himself reminiscing fondly of the fortress in the cliffs that had been his true home. It had been there that he'd found his true calling. Until then he'd been a mere hunter, and a successful enough of one that the game learned to avoid the immediate vicinity around the fortress. In his spare time he'd taken up bonecarving in order to produce bone bolts for the archers to practice with.

He shuddered somewhat at the thought. It seemed so wasteful to him now, and thinking that made him realize how much he had truly changed since then. His sentence, that of five hammerstrikes, for not producing a crystal glass object was as disproportionate as it was unfair and he had not forgotten it. Neither had he forgotten his friend and clan-mate that had lain there with him in the same fate. It was here that he had decided to make his stand. There were few followers of Mondul, but he'd sent out missionaries, believers of virtue and merit to persuade others and, in time, there might be more.

He looked down again at the stone throne he'd been working on. It was one of Glacies' pieces, and exquisite of design. A few of the cross-braces on the legs looked only slightly irregular, but still a truly exceptional piece of work. And decorated on it he had placed scenes from their fortress, or history as he saw fit. Sometime it was purely decorative, other times more instructional. A sound from the chasm brought his attention away from the goods in his platinum wrought workshop towards the door. Sarah burst through the door, visibly distressed.

"What's the matter lass?"

"Oh, Led, call the Hound. It's disgusting. The undead have been interrupting my excavations. Every time I try to get further along that... thing... everyone calls Rovod Galleypieces flies over and I have to run."

The High priest nodded, and popped his head out the door into the main stairwell, giving a shrill whistle. It was a private joke between him and Paulus. The whistle was technically used to call a hunting hawk back. But most would think along different lines. The distinctions however, were significant when one realized that hawks did the hunting. Dogs merely guided the hunter. And in this place only One was the true hunter of the undead.

Paulus showed up moments later, his hammer carried easily in one hand, buckler strapped to his other arm and carrying a mountain goat skull. Tossing it casually on the pile he listened as Sarah explained her situation before leaving to deal with it.

Led turned back to Sarah as the Hound left.

"Don't worry now. He'll take care of it."

She raised an eyebrow. "Doesn't he normally wear armor?"

Led merely shrugged and chuckled. "Aye, but he's been saying it slows him down. Besides, it's just a zombie cave swallowman."

He casually slipped an arm around her waist. "So, why don't you come and see what I've been doing in here. This is the furniture for the dining hall." He'd almost revealed his plans for what he would do with it to her, but some things needed to be kept quiet.

She walked with him, slipping her arm around her lover's waist and smiling.

"I suppose I do have a bit of time right now. Show me what you've been doing."

((1 more zombie down... lol. 75 pages more to go. And yes, Led and Sarah are now lovers. Only relationship I've found so far.))

8th of Limestone

A small crowd of onlookers and well wishers were gathered around the single figure of a dwarf. In his hand he held a masterful obsidian mug, polished to a deep midnight black with small red streaks evident in it. He steadied himself on the table and looked blearily at the mug in his hand, almost as if he couldn't believe it dared to stand still for so long. He pressed the mug to his lips even as those around began a low chant in old dethic slang.

"phur... phur... Phur... Phur... Phur... "

The chanting gradually increased at Mosus began tipping the amber liquid into his throat. The well aged dwarven rum still brought tears to his eyes, despite having emptied all but the last mug of a keg that stood next to him on the floor.

The chanting continued, switching to common.

"Chug... Chug... CHUG!"

And with a final note he drained the last of the mug, slamming it down on the table in front of him. His vision was eerily clear, too clear for a dwarf. His legs shook a bit, but he brought them under control and raised his hands in the air with a cheer, as the others joined in.

Several of the crowd were eyeing him appreciatively. There were precious few men around, and now that he'd come of age he was fair game. Life would certainly get a little more interesting. Thesaurusaurus was the first to come up and heartily slap his son on the back.

"Congratulations, me boy. I'm proud of ye."

He grinned back, a slightly tilted smile.

"Thanks Da."

He grew somber for a minute, whispering to his father.

"I wish Mum and Led could be here to see me."

His father gripped his shoulder and gave it a squeeze.

"Aye, I do to, but in a way, they are here. The dead are with us in spirit, if not in flesh."

"I know the way, but it's still hard."

"You've time ahead of you yet. Death walks with all of us. Do not run from it."

"I won't, Da. You know that."

"Aye. So, have ye given thought to what you'd like to do with your life?"

"Not yet. But I'm thinking about it."

"Take your time."

He grinned. "I always do."

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **ousire** on **June 21, 2009, 01:00:32 am**

hehe. dwarfen beer chugging contest :P

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 21, 2009, 11:12:03 am**

((I figured I'd be a good dwarven coming of age ritual. ;D))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 22, 2009, 02:15:41 pm**

16th of Limestone Early Fall

Urvad tightened her grip on her axe as the wagons lumbered along. Being a merchant guard wasn't particularly glamorous but it did pay well. At least, when the caravan didn't lose any goods or wagons. When they did the guards lost their 'bonus' pay and had to be content with working for slightly better than common soldiers. When she and what remained of her family had been shipped to Shieldhelms they'd set up shop as it were. Her children were all growing now, and though she was loathe to part from them none of the nobles or even the Mayor would hire her on as guard after learning she'd trained at Dorenemal. She'd even been a champion there, but the only employ for her skills she'd found was as merchant guard.

The trade guilds had been desperate for anyone with fighting skill, and that she certainly had. Her application had consisted of sparring with one of the guilds veteran soldiers. After tripping him and disarming him in five moves she'd been hired on instantly, and with an advanced pay scale. It was the only way to pay for room and board for her family. And with five children surviving and looking to her for their support she couldn't take 'no' for an answer. Going civilian was simply unacceptable. She had no skills whatsoever. One of her older children had some talent as bonecarver and had been taken on, and she'd left the others in his care.

Shaking her head from her reverie she scanned the horizon ahead. This mountain range was known to be highly dangerous, but they'd never lost a caravan here yet, and she intended that it not happen under her watch. Something simply did not feel right. They were nearing Geshud Osod, could see already the peak with the unfinished construction on top. The walls looked to be some sort of tower being erected.

A call from ahead brought her attention to her more immediate surroundings and she trotted up to investigate. She'd been put in charge of the soldiers and Egul informed her as soon as she arrived near the lead that a human soldier had been spotted off to the west slightly.

The scene as she advanced was nearly comical. A tall dark-skinned human carrying a long spear and hide-shield had a dog-sized zombie Hoary marmot pinned by the skull to the ground. Every time the human would move the marmot would as well. The human did not seem able to shake the marmot off and seemed loathe to abandon his weapon. Hurrying up she greeted him with a salute before slicing into the undead creature with her axe, severing it's spine just below the neck, and flinging the severed body a few dozen paces.

Saluting the person towering above her she greeted him.

"Hai, what puts you out here?"

For his part the human looked relieved, finally able to rest on his spear, marmot skull and all. After a few moments of catching his breath he reversed his spear and stepped on the skull, removing it from his spear tip.

"I thank you friend dwarf. I was guard with the caravan of our kind that passed here a month ago. This creature attacked us and I came to deal with it. My spear got stuck. I cannot lose the weapon of my father of I would face disgrace upon returning. Particularly to such a creature."

Urvad raised an eyebrow and cocked her head.

"You've been out here a month?"

He nodded, wearily. "Indeed. The spear could not come out while it lived and fought, but I could stick it to the ground when I was weary so I could rest and eat. I have been struggling with it for all that time."

Urvad shook her head. "You humans are bloody crazy. Come, we can at least refresh some of your provisions."

"I thank you, and my people thank you. I should be able to catch up to the wagons in two weeks time. They make for the next city of your people, further north. I should be able to find them on their way."

A shrill call from behind them interrupted them.

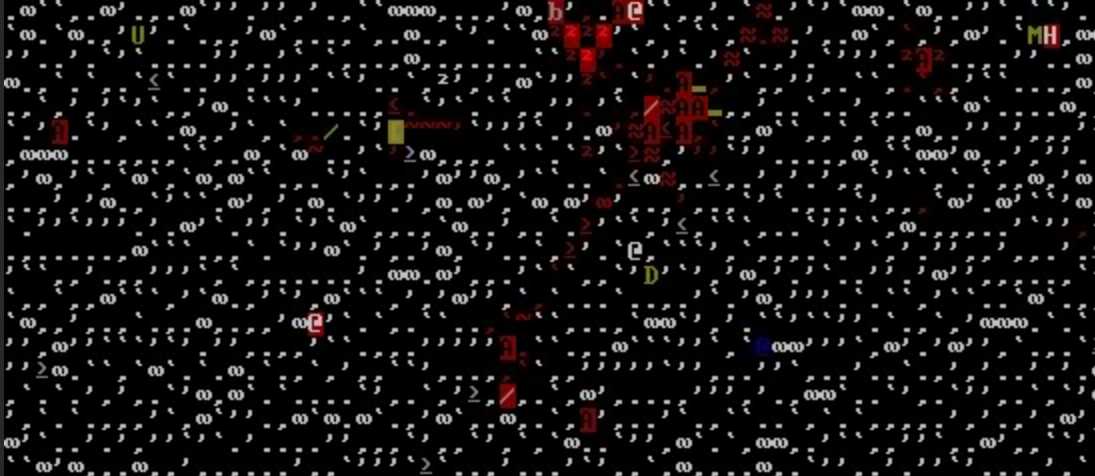
"Ambush!!! They come upon us from above!"

A chill went through Urvads spine as she turned to witness the scene. A full squad of Avarii in wargear was descending through the light fog upon the caravan. Fifteen with maces. Their leader, an elite crossbow wielder was above raining bolts down upon the caravan's animals. Urvand swore lightly under her breath and she and the human looked at one another briefly before both nodded. There was an understanding among caravan guards. They would look after each other as possible. The pair charged into the chaotic fray. Animals were bleating as the avarii came among them, pale winged humans staving in wheels with their maces and assaulting merchant and dwarf alike.

The liason, Tekkud fled towards the fortress, presumably to raise the alarm there. Urvad knew that they would be too late in coming. The battle would be won or lost before then. She peeled off towards a group chasing a merchant and his pack-mule taking the mace-wielders on one at a time as she ran them down.

The human was eerily deadly. In grim silence he charged a group of five avari destroying a wagon and attacking the merchant and animals. He came upon them from behind, impaling the first through the chest with his spear, the tip protruding out the front as the Avar died in an instant.Yanking his spear free he moved on, pinning one to the ground by a wing and stepping on it while he drove his weapon repeatedly into the avarii frame until it too was dead. The others turned on him then but his skill with the spear was unmatched and in rapid succession he slew them as well.

The remainder of the caravan guards had rallied by this time, driving off the remaining avar, despite the losses. Faced by a slew of hostile forces on the ground and without more ammunition the avar leader called a retreat and with only two of his remaining soldiers flew off into the fog.



Dwarf and human came together again at the scene of carnage.

"Human, we thank you for your assistance. Take what you will of the supplies from the destroyed wagons. They will spoil if not used, and we are grateful for your aid."

The human shrugged. "Thank me not for doing what is in my power to do. I accept the food and drink though, that I may return to my people. Fare you well."

"And you. We'll not lightly forget this."

The human merely smiled, hefting his spear and filling his satchel with strips of the meat from the destroyed wagon. He emptied his waterskin and refilled it from a barrel and gave one last salute before departing.

Urvad shook her head as he left and surveyed the remains of her caravan. The others had fled, back to Shieldhelms they would go. A single merchant and his animal remained. The merchant's mind had snapped and he would not go, his donkey remained stubbornly at his side. It was only then that it occurred to her she'd never even gotten the humans name. She would have to see that he received their proper thanks.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 22, 2009, 07:07:22 pm**

Urvad watched the small force from Geshud Osod arrive. Most of them wore mismatched pieces of steel armor, or bone, strangely enough. Their weapons looked equally unorganized and the wood, copper and other inferior metals were testament to their relative disuse. Only the leader was garbed in quality attire. His chainmail shirt gleamed a dull brown-silver that bespoke of newness. But the rest of his gear was well-used, if covered in gore. Spikes of bone and blood spattered decorations that must have been trophies decorated his equipment. A heavy steel warhammer carried in his hand was likewise decorated. His helmet was the truly bizarre piece, however. The helmet, made of bone looked like the skull of a large dog, decorated and carved into an intricate and fierce-looking piece. His beard was braided short and tucked into his vest and there was something about his gait that bespoke familiarity to her.

She'd heard about the cultists, of course. Everyone in Shieldhelms had heard of them by now. Most of the rumors floating around mentioned that they were deranged. That they slaughtered fellow dwarves and drank their blood. That they consorted with goblins to plunder and steal. Most of those were not believed outright. But the more insidious ones were those that tied the cultists to the Fahlstrom clan. And it was because of that connection that many of those who'd been in the clan had joined with the nobles clan upon moving to Shieldhelms. There'd been many that refused to do so, and most of those found themselves shunned by the others, or passed up on promotions or employment as she'd been.

What had happened to the cultists had been considerably worse.

She could understand why they'd settled here. Few would want to live in such accursed land. As she watched their leader barked a few inaudible instructions and a pair took off to the left, another pair to the right, moving to secure the area.

The leader and another axedwarf moved towards her and instinctively her grip tightened.

"Hoy there the caravan!" came the call from the leader.

"Hoy the fortress!"

"Can we be of assistance?"

She spat on the ground.

"You're a little too late for that."

"Aye, we came as we could. The liason informed us of your trouble."

"It's a little late now." She guestured expansively around her. "This is the result."

As they approached she looked at the other dwarf with the leader. His face was visibly mangled, one side badly damaged and still red and somewhat raw, but the rest of it she thought she recognized. As they got closer recognition dawned in them all.

"Kolok? Is that you?"

Kolok, stopped and looked at her carefully with his good eye. "Urvad? Urvad! What in the stones are you doing here? It's good to see you."

The Hound removed his helmet as he approached, grinning broadly. Urvad looked both shocked and pleased.

"Paulus, you young rascal! You're here too? Last I heard you were all still down south at Onol Lened."

"We were. But you know how it is." Paulus grinned. "Nobility arrives and the neighborhood goes down the sewers. Nothing against King Tosid of course."

Their weapons were sheathed and a round of hugs, shaking and backslapping ensued as they re-acquainted themselves.

"So what really happened at Onol Lened? Rumors have been flying, but no one really knows. All sorts of things are said of the south, most of them bad. Us of the clan figured it was mostly nonsense."

Paulus' face darkened, as did Kolok's.

"If you've heard the same rumors I have, they're not too far from true."

Urvad rocked back slightly on her heels. "A horde of gibbering elves attacked the fort from within and were only driven back by the guards of the King?"

Kolok chuckled. "Nay, nothing quite like that, but elves there were. I saw the place with my own eyes." He shivered and grew serious. "I'd

not look upon that place again for a the riches of the old world."

Paulus nodded. "Nor I, given the chance I think. The king had not arrived yet when it happened, but came shortly thereafter. The whole affair left a bad taste in my mouth and I was glad when Led came, to make my way here with him. Fre's here as well, as is Ragnar. Aardvark stayed behind to work the forges."

Urvad looked closely at Paulus, then Kolok.

"Are you of the cultists as well then?"

Both Paulus and Kolok answered at the same time, one affirmatively, one negatively. Urvad merely nodded.

"Are others of the clan welcome here then?"

Paulus shrugged. "You'd not be turned away. But this place is no Dorenemal."

At the mention of their former home Urvad went silent, as did the others.

A crazed braying filled the void as the three turned to see the merchant's donkey bucking and kicking it's load off madly.

"Poor beast's snapped." Urvad quickly ran over, felling it in one swing. The merchant seemed to come to his senses at this.

"What's that? What's going on?"

Urvad gave him a smart salute. "Sorry sir. Animal went crazy after the attack."

She escorted him over to the others, slowly, as he still looked half dazed, muttering quietly to himself.

"No, no, this can't be happening..."

As soon as he saw the cultists he seemed to come to himself again.

"You there! These goods belong to the Merchant's guild and is their rightful property. I will report any theft of goods directly to the King."

Paulus looked from the merchant to Urvad, who remained in stony silence, frowning and biting her lip.

A sudden insight dawned upon Paulus and he smiled. He knew the goods were rightfully theirs now. They'd been left or lost on their claimed territory. It was unlikely that the merchants were aware just how large of territory the King had granted to Led for the fortress. The merchant seeing his smile became even more nervous.

"I mean it. I'm warning you..."

Paulus raised his hands. "I tell you what... let's make a deal."

The merchant began stammering "Deals can only be made at a proper depot... it's ... " he squinted at the hardfaced dwarf in front of him. "Just what kind of a deal?"

"It's clear that you cannot take these goods with you."

The merchant almost began objecting before he was cut off. "Hear me out. This is what I propose. We will claim the goods that have been left here. When you return next year, presumably, we'll make restitution for them, on top of our normal trade."

He blinked. "You'll pay for the goods here?"

"Aye, we'll pay for them, at production costs, to account for transportation and spoilage that will undoubtedly occur."

"Production costs! That's not..."

Paulus raised his hands again.

"In addition, we'll cover the costs to reimburse the families of those that died fighting here in gold bars, as well as cover the cost of their gear, which we claim. We will of course see to their proper burial as befits those of our kind, respected in war."

The merchant's hands fidgeted slightly as he thought. It was an exceptional offer. Covering the costs of the fallen on top of loss of all their goods would have been a heavy blow for the guild on top of already significant losses. Establishing new trade routes had not been cheap, financially or in blood. He wasn't truly authorized to broker such a deal, but under the circumstances could hope for little better. It was a way to redeem the journey, despite the losses.

"Deal."

The two shook on it. Pointing to Urvad he quipped.

"You're my second witness. See that we both return intact to Shieldhelms. Now let's go soldier."

Urvad only nodded grimly as the merchant began walking off. She turned back to Paulus and shrugged, apologetically.

He nodded, smiling.

"Give my regards to the family. And to little Paulus of course."

Urvad went suddenly grim. "I wish I could. There's only five of my children left. I'm afraid he never made the crossing. I was forced to bury him at sea."

Paulus reached out, placing a hand on her shoulder. "I'm truly sorry. If you need anything, we're here."

She nodded, turning swiftly away from them and began following the merchant.

A single tear fell, splashing onto the blood-soaked rocks beneath her.

So true, and still so funny.

What can I say that I have not said before, Paulus? Your writing continues to astound and amaze. Well done, and it's good to have you back.

((Thanks Fre, greatly appreciated. I will actually be out of town again next week at a family reunion, and over the holiday week (end).))

17th of Timber

Erith and Boink were busy chatting as they picked their way up the loose scree of the slope, heading towards the site of the previous battle between the caravan and the avar. There remained much to still be returned to the fortress, but it was a considerable distance away. The two women chatted amicably in the heat of the morning sun, only a light cloud-cover remained, and that would likely not last long. Behind them trailed Boink's pet chicken. She'd brought it with her since it was a hatchling and thought it was cute. Now it trailed her around, almost like a cat, occasionally picking at the ground or eating cave spiders with a quick peck of her beak.

A shadow crossed the ground in front of the pair as they walked and Boink frowned, erith looking up into the sky. Alarmed she called out as the pair broke for cover.

"Ambush! The avarii are upon us!"

Another full squad of winged humans were hastily beating their way towards the pair of dwarves, who, upon seeing them, took off like twin rabbits making for their warren. The avarii were no match for the speed of the dwarves familiar with the terrain and the squad soon settled onto a nearby hill-top. The leader took careful aim with her cross-bow before squeezing off a few bolts at the retreating dwarves, but they went wide. Surrounded by axe-men she was confident the dwarves would not return, but it was then looking towards the fortress peak she saw movement below. A single chicken unwittingly scratched it's way across the ground and soon it's life was snuffed, a bolt through it's scrawny body.

A wail could be heard as the dwarves fled.

"Nooooo. Not Kogsak!"

Had the dwarves been paying attention they would have seen the avar leader stop and beckon towards the swamps to the east. As it was, they were too busy fleeing.

The avar were content to wait.

Until reinforcements came.

The fortress had galvanized after erith's and Boink's discovery. Travel above-ground was considered dangerous but despite this Boink could not be consoled. As her mourning for her lost companion continued so grew the desire for action.

Two days after the ambush, Fath, one of the cultists working closely with Fre was moved to pity. She stole forth in the dead of night, sneaking cautiously towards the hillside where, according to Boink's description Kogsak lay. The pale moonlight reflected luminously off of patches of snow, and these she avoided, trying her level best to remain inconspicuous as she moved. She spent minutes moving mere feet as she approaced the hill-side from beneath. Up ahead, on the rocky slope she thought she could make out the still form of the beloved pet.

Foot by foot, inch by inch she moved closer until the small bird lay in her hands.

A noise above her startled her into movement and out of the corner of her eye she saw a flash of moonlight on metal and broke into a frantic run. The clack of a crossbow began sounding behind her and she heard the sharp retort of bolts shattering on nearby stones as she ran, clutching the bird. She had only a little way to go before she reached the bottom of the valley and then it was flat out running, but a sudden pain in her back threw her to the ground. She dropped the chicken in order to catch herself as the pain burned into her.

She ran then, for her life, knowing that if she stayed a moment longer she would lie next to the bird. It came as a strange realization and in a detached way she reflected upon her own life. She was at peace with how she had lived and knew then that she need not fear death. Another clack from behind and a faint buzz, let her know that her death might only be a heart-beat away.

The bolt passed within inches of her ear but she gained the flat of the valley and broke into a swift run, losing her enemy to the darkness.

By the time she got back to the fortress she had been missed, and both the Hound and Led met her at the mouth, concern in her priest's face. The Hound saw to her wound as she gave a quick explanation to Led and they led her below, to the dining hall, where they left her to explain to the others.

The pair walked swiftly away.

"Paulus, assemble the fighters. We will not be made prisoners in our own home."

The Hound nodded and then disappeared, toward the workshops as Led headed towards his precious workshop. His spear was there, as were the rest of the arms and armor they would need. It was time they stopped running. It was time to fight.

allright, time to kick some birdbrain butt!

Early Obsidian, Winter

Several dwarven figures crouched quietly in the light snow of the upper slope. They'd been as quiet as possible and with the wind howling through the valley, along with the light blanket of snow their movements had been muffled and undetected. Five dwarves huddled immeadiately above the avarii squad. Five on fifteen. The dwarves were well armored though, mostly steel armor, if somewhat mismatched graced every figure, and at least sturdy dwarven chain. A boon of having the caravan guards attacked, as it were. Paulus hefted his steel warhammer, next to him Led clutched his copper spear, complete with an engraving of King Tosid. Ragnar was there as well, on Paulus' other side, and beside her was Kolok both with axes. Flanking Led was Draconius, clutching an iron mace pilfered from the fallen avar.

They knew the avar were below, they could hear slight sounds of movement, what sounded like feet stamping on the ground. Paulus' hand raised, in a clenched fist and then opened as he made a downward chopping motion and en masse the dwarves launched themselves from the upper slope onto the unsuspecting ambushers below. Draconius in her zeal went so far as to jump from a boulder on the slope directly on top of one of the avar below, smashing into him like a dwarven missile. It was only once the dwarves engaged that they realized their danger. The avar ambush squad was now mounted on some sort of horse! It wasn't until one turned towards them, whinnying in fear that the horn on their heads were visible.



Despite this the dwarves pressed on, barreling down the hill to crash into the side of the avarii with tremendous force, metal meeting flesh. Draconius lay lightly stunned on top of the avar, whom he had knocked of the unicorn, which also lay prone nearby, but was getting up quickly. The avar was not so fast. Rolling off of the human Draco began laying into him with gusto, smashing ribs.

Led had charged directly into one of the avar, spearing a unicorn and unseating the avar on it. He kept the unicorn pinned while Ragnar came up and dispatched the fallen avar before putting the unicorn down as well, with a series of well-placed blows. In the confusion Kolok had a seemingly hard time keeping a target in his monocular vision, but he scythed the legs out from under a passing unicorn that was charging the group, spilling the avar in a tangle.

The avar scattered in all directions, surprised and disoriented at the ferocity of the dwarven counter-attack.

The Hound was laying into enemies, unseating them before chasing them and their mounts down. He knew the key of the battle lay in defeating the leader and turning amid the chaos he spied him below in the valley and gave chase, passing Led, Kolok and Ragnar chasing down another pair of mounted avar. He advanced on the leader who spied him and began firing bolts. Another of the avar jumped out to engage the dwarf and in a blow was knocked to the ground. The Hound turned on the unicorn that was rearing up in front of him and as it descended his axe rose to meet it with such force that the beast went flying backwards, landing in a broken heap against a tree. The avar axeman was dispatched with equal speed as the leader began firing upon the dwarf in true desperation. The elite crossbowman backpedalled as the dwarf approached but could not strike true, bolt flying wide or being deflected by the dwarf's sturdy steel buckler. A bolt caught the dwarf in the shield arm but he shrugged off the blow, leaving it embedded as he advanced.

In a final fierce lunge Paulus launched himself at the Avar, missing the winged human but connecting with the unicorn beneath, crushing it's hindquarters and sending the beast rolling onto the ground. The avar was caught beneath it momentarily but managed to pull itself free as the dwarf still the thrashing of the beast. As the hammer was coming down the strike the avar he blocked it with his arm, breaking it soundly, but with his other he fired at the dwarf, point-blank, bolt piercing through armor and flesh, embedding itself into the creature. Almost in a daze the pair of combatants assessed each other, one with a broken arm that could no longer operate it's weapon, the other, arms pierced and bleeding with bolts. And the avarii leader fled, as Draconius, having seen the battle charged the leader as well, but unable to catch up.



Behind them the avar were routed and scattered. Led was busy chasing a mounted avar towards both Draconius and Paulus and the former was able to turn and help pin the creature between them, slaying the winged human, with a blow to the head, even as Led, wounded by the beast, fended off the unicorn with his spear.

The battle was won, but not easily, nor without cost. The liason was found within hours, at the top of a nearby hill. One of the avar had gotten in a lucky blow before Ragnar had dispatched it and the liason lay on the ground, left leg cleanly severed at the knee. Led made his way back to the infirmary beds and Paulus was taken in as well.

Tekkud, the liason, refused to be placed in bed and between lapses of conciousness insisted his meeting with Led continue. Despite the danger of scattered avar and unicorns that remained in the area and would not flee.

((Kill count:
Ragnar 3 Avar 3 unicorns
Kolok 1 unicorn
Draconius 2 Avar 1 unicorn
Paulus 3 Avar 4 Unicorns))

((7 Avar and unicorns were scattered throughout the area and remain at large.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 25, 2009, 02:35:46 pm**

"Do you think Ragnar will be all right?"

Paulus craned his neck sideways so he could see Led, and gave a half-hearted shrug.

"Ragnar can take care of herself. That last battle she was more her old self then I've ever seen, and it looked to me that when it was all over she was still peeved. She'll be fine. That squad is broken. She'll hunt them down, don't worry."

"If you say so. You're ok with what we're going to do then?"

Paulus grumbled something under his breath, causing Led to chuckle somewhat. "Aye, I understand. I don't like being laid up any more than you. Reminds me almost of old times."

Paulus shook his head. "Let's not go there. I spent months in that black pit, only to get out and be hammered and spend the next two and a half years recovering."

Led nodded briefly, remembering his own few strikes and the subsequent recovery. Wisely, he changed the subject.

"Thesaurusaurus, if you don't mind sending Sarah in..."

The scribe nodded quickly and went to the door, letting her into the sleeping quarters where their main office had been set up temporarily. She quickly went to his bedside, drawing up a stone coffer to sit upon.

She'd been to see him often, as often as occasion would permit, and their relationship was, by now, known to almost all.

"Sarah, what I'm about to do I don't think you'll enjoy very much, nor would I force you to do it, but the vacancy needs to be filled."

She looked at him quizzically and hastily added. "Of course, whatever you need."

"Then in my official capacity I now title you, Hound of Mondul."

She paled visibly in the lantern-light and swallowed. To her credit she nodded once, slowly.

"I... I ... accept, then. If that is what is needed."

Led sighed. "Aye. Until Paulus recovers you shall be acting in that capacity. You have Mondul's blessing and mine. Go speak with the Hound. His is the only warhammer we have."

She stood to go, and Led laid one hand on her arm as she was about to leave, whispering.

"Thank you, and be careful."

Paulus' warhammer lay next to his legs on the stone bed, the handle with grasping distance of his better arm, and as Sarah approached his did his best to rise, propping himself up on his good elbow, albeit painfully, before sitting up. He grasped the handle of the steel warhammer and slowly lifted it, head down, handle up, extending it to Sarah, who grasped the handle as well.

"Use it well."

She nodded once, taking the heavy weapon from him, to his visible relief before leaving the room.

Once it was quiet once more the pair lay, wrapped in thought for a while before speaking again.

"Have I done the right thing do you think Paulus?"

"It must be done."

"I know that. But there are so many uncertainties to life. Is she ready?"

There was a greater pause.

"I don't know Led. I'm not sure there's ever a ready when it comes to doing something. What must be done, must be done though. And she's the best choice."

Led knew it was true, and lay back down to recover. He had done it, but he didn't have to like putting his lover in such a position. It might change her forever.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 26, 2009, 11:44:55 am**

Last day of the year, Winter

Led sat on a chair next to his bed. He was already feeling much better and his wounds were already mostly recovered. Many of the others were gathered in the room, with very few exceptions. He raised one hand to quiet everyone and soon a hush fell over the room.

"I know this may seem a little unorthodox to some of you, but this year we shall hold a ceremony of a different sort."

That announcement received a mixed response. Some truly looked forward to the end of the year brawl and Draconius seemed particularly put out. Others seemed somewhat relieved.

"I believe we've seen enough of Death recently with the Avarii attack upon our holding. But in this I do have good news! I was informed earlier today that thanks to Sarah, and Ragnar the remainder of them have been hunted down and dispatched without further injury. Work can continue again outside as needed, without fear."

A small cheer went up again.

"For Ragnar's valor she shall now be known as Ragnar Culthall the Solitary Honesties! May she live long and well among us."

Another cheer rang out and brief chanting of Ragnar's name.

"As many of you know there are those that live among us that are not of our beliefs, and yet have worked tirelessly to help and support us. That is the true meaning of brotherhood, of being a clan. Though we have been beaten and shunned by much of the rest of our own people, still our clan has supported us in our trials, aided us in our weakness.

One such individual I want to honor, according to clan tradition, is ... Fre. She has worked long and hard to provide us the food and sustenance we need to do our work and has received little or nothing for it. For her efforts I now grant to her always a place among us as well as ownership of the second hall, may she use it well!"

(The second hall, it may be noted was the dining, food storage and food preparation areas.)

"Let us now retire to that location and celebrate our good fortunes together!"

It was indeed a welcome celebration, and true to clan fashion the drinking did not cease until well into the morning of the new year.

((Fre, consider the entire second hall your bar now. It's mostly furnished but I'm still working on a few things. I'll post a screenshot and description of furniture as I'm able. If you have any additions or recommendations you'd like to make, feel free. I've got a special workshop set up for furniture that can be made from any stone available to us. And a bonecrafting yard as well. Metalworks and gemworks will be coming soon. So, whatever you'd like it made into, feel free to request.

Oh, and Ragnar's total kills for the avar is now 8 avar and 7 unicorns
Sarah also got 2 avar and 3 unicorns, as well as a named zombie cave swallowman, and a half dozen zombie mountain goats in her duties so far as Hound.

Oh, and Led recovered fully starting spring. Paulus now only has two bright yellow wounds instead of one yellow and one red.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 26, 2009, 06:51:08 pm**

((Here's a few screenies of the second hall, I.e. Fre's cantina.



That's lower floor (food storage), main hall with entrance into the Third Hall, or grand Hall, and the upper floor with farms (mostly Thesaurusaurus), kitchen (Fre only in there folks!), brewery (mostly Fath) and storage for seeds, bags and barrels. Oh, and a food processing workshop. It's still kinda chaotic, and I really need to dig another storage level for food.

Fre, here's your current inventory:

- 1 Masterwork Orthoclase statue (middle of stairs on main dining level)
- 2 Rhyolite doors for back access stairs (one exceptional the other superior, both unadorned)
- 2 Exceptionally decorated Masterwork Orthoclase entry doors. (room for a sign, I'll leave to you what you want your pub/cantina to be named)
- 1 Exceptionally decorated superior Orthoclase table (near door)
- 5 Masterwork Orthoclase tables (three decorated to exceptional levels, all three on your 'bar' near the top of the room)
- 7 Exceptional Orthoclase tables (6 decorated to exceptional levels, all on your bar)
- 7 Exceptional Orthoclase chairs (3 decorated to exceptional levels at your bar)
- 1 superior Orthoclase chair
- 1 Masterwork Orthoclase chair (decorated to exceptional levels at your bar)
- 1 superior Mica chair
- 6 Exceptional Mica chair
- 5 Masterwork Mica chair
- 3 Masterwork Mica tables
- 6 Exceptional Mica tables
- 1 superior Mica table
- 4 Exceptional Rhyolite tables
- 1 superior Granite table
- 2 Exceptional Granite tables
- 1 Masterwork Granite table
- 3 Exceptional Granite chairs
- 1 Masterwork Granite chair

The average value for each decorated item is about 350 ingots, otherwise about 75 on average.
You also have over 1000 types of drink of all kinds, and almost 200 of each category of food. (meat, plants, fish, and 400 other, with no room to make more at the moment.)

Other food service workers directly include Fath. Thesaurusaurus helps with farming.

Oh and you've got countless fabulous engravings courtesy of Boink. On walls on the main level only. Anyways, I may get more posts in before vacation, I may not. We'll see.

So if not, have a happy American Indepence Day!!!

Oh, and below is a spoiler of decorations on the more amusing pieces of furniture.

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **June 26, 2009, 08:48:05 pm**

Wow, Paulus. It's great! The bar is just as envisioned, and the rest of the materiel is excellent. I especially like that little table for one in the back, good to sip your ale while watching over the others. Having a table with Led surrounded by backpacks is pretty humorous too.

As to the name out front, like all things in Dwarf Fortress, it shall be decided by the random name generator (though with a few rejects). Let's see...

The Dye of Responsibilities	
The Uncommon Standard	Not bad. Our Standards of "Good" are vastly superior.
The Whip of Intensity	
The Knife of Pets	
The Bold Anvil	I like this one too. Just sounds like the name of a pub.
The Theatre of Clarifying	
The Post of Distractions	
The Hairy Wall	
The Jade Roof	More like a Chinese restaurant, but still a restaurant.

Alright, out of those 10, I think I'm going with "The Bold Anvil." A tavern of fame throughout the land. Thanks Paulus. To be completely honest, I had somewhat forgotten that request. You sure pull through. And have a happy 4th!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 27, 2009, 02:56:10 pm**

16th of Granite

Led was up above, enjoying some fresher air, even if it were bitingly cold still. Construction on the walls had begun again recently, though many were still busy bringing in goods from the fallen avar and the caravan. It would have been nice to make the entire structure out of one single type of stone, but it was equally appropriate to use the mixture of Andesite, Felsite, Granite and Orthoclase that the mountain itself was composed of.

An out of breath runner came up to greet him.

"Sir, Fre reported some activity on our northern perimeter. Two groups of insectoid have been spotted battling undead there. And several scouts of theirs were caught in our traps as they tried to sneak in."

Led frowned, but nodded.

"Thank you Asmel. Ask Sarah to stand guard at the gate. And alert the others that we might have trouble and to be ready to move if absolutely necessary. If they stay up there we'll leave them be for now. But forbid retrieval of goods as well, just to be sure. Oh, and seal the trade gates."

The dwarf saluted briefly before running off.

Led stared out into the environs.

Why could they not just be left alone?

Then after a moment thought he grinned.

It just wouldn't be as interesting. And besides, Mondul has her reasons. It would all be to her glory should they persevere. And would still

serve her will if not.

((Thanks Fre. I know I'd probably use the single table myself, it's just the way I am. I also thought the backpack fetish very amusing. As for the name, sounds great. I'll work it in before too long. I do my best to remember requests, but sometimes it doesn't fit into the story at the time. It'll get there eventually, but some things just take longer. Don't worry, this story is all about dwarven perseverance, among other things.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 08, 2009, 06:07:31 pm**

19th of Granite Logs of the Fortress, Paulus Fahlstrom clerk

The experience of being injured hasn't improved any since the last time I was. At the very least, however, my injuries are less severe and I hope to be fully recovered soon enough. I'm able to write, albeit slowly, with my injuries, but as I've little else to do paperwork seems a reasonable exercise.

We've apparently caught more insectoid spies in some of our cage traps and at least two others were spooked when they were seen attempting entry. One of them in it's haste to depart nearly eviscerated Mosus' cat in the entry way and the cat itself collapsed on top of one of our cage traps. I've considered having it left in the trap and putting it near Mosus' bed, but I think releasing it to fend for itself would be a more suitable thing. A wounded animal serves no purpose and it would be better for even a cat to go down fighting than live years with crippling injuries.

Ragnar has come to visit me recently as well, requesting to be released from military service to return to mining duties. I've given her leave to do so of course, and as an additional gift for her service given her the anurite shovel we've reclaimed from the elves. In her hands it's both a magnificent tool as well as a deadly weapon. Perhaps I should begin calling her the 'Shoveller'. I jest of course.

Boink's work on the animal tombs continues well, but persistent trouble from the flying corpses plagues the work in the crack. Perhaps I'll ask Sarah to breach a few of the prepared locations and take care of them. But there is time for that later as she's busy working on Mondul's temple along with most of the others. I'm told they've finally begun raising the walls of the temple further and things there are progressing, despite the need for hundreds more blocks. Perhaps thousands before we're entirely finished.

One of the delays was the construction of a residence around our liason, who still stubbornly insists he's 'fine' and that it's just a 'flesh wound'. He's not left the peak nearby and I know for a fact that Led has gone to visit him several times. He's now got a summer home here, meager as it is, it should keep him out of the sun.



((Any ideas with how I can deal with an amputee liason let me know. He keeps passing out all the time.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire withi**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **July 08, 2009, 09:21:21 pm**

((Might Boink get to execute a few prisoners to blow off some steam? A dead chicken is a heavy burden on the mind)).

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 08, 2009, 09:30:33 pm**

((I'll see to it. Boink will actually come up in the next post, and I'm about three posts ahead at the moment, but I'll see it happens here soon enough.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 09, 2009, 04:26:46 pm**

1st of Slate

Ragnar awoke with a start, staring up at the smooth stone ceiling of her room. In the dark air above her she could almost still see the outline of two fiery eyes from her dream, and hear the subtly shifting voice of her Lord. It was the day of rebirth and now was the time for her to awaken and get to work.

Rolling out of bed she washed her face briefly using a large stone bowl and pitcher on her table and grabbed her shovel from where it rested against the wall. She hefted it again and shook her head. At first she'd thought it far too light to be an effective tool but she'd found to her delight that it cut through granite as if it were almost sand. And surprisingly it's edge had not even begun to show signs of wear. A light knock on her door signalled the arrival of Boink. She'd spoken with her the day before and as the skilled engraver had no specific work to do she'd agreed to help Ragnar out, in return for similar treatment in the future.

Ragnar quietly opened her door and Boink entered, before the sturdy miner closed it again behind her and sealed it with a small brass key in her pocket.

"Is that really necessary Ragnar?"

Ragnar nodded once, almost hesitantly. "Aye lass. Ah don't want to arouse anyone's wrath just yet. But everythin's prepared b'low."

The pair, each with the respective tools of their trade descended through Ragnar's prized hatch covers into the store-room below. It was filled to the brim with barrels of supplies. Boink gave Ragnar an inquisitive look, one eyebrow raised.

"How long are you planning on us being down there?"

Ragnar shrugged.

"S'long as it takes. I persuaded Fre dat dis space here was open. S'her private storage fer now. Only the finest o' her meals and quality liquor."

Ragnar grinned and set to work, digging a shaft downwards in the back of the room, behind the barrels, carving out a small circular staircase as she went. Her dream had shown her the way, but in the semi-darkness her doubts began again to assail her. Still, she headed directly south, her innate sense of direction allowing her to carve a single straight line as she bent herself to her task. Boink behind her could not keep up with her pace, as every square she emptied made several surfaces for the other to smooth.

It seemed like an eternity to her, and as she got tired or sleepy she simply returned to her room to rest, but gradually the tunnel took shape, a straight shaft through the stone; granite, microcline, obsidian, copper veins, a small gemstone pocket hastily mined out as a matter of habit, before the shaft began taking her into felsite and then obsidian again until it was warm to the touch. A small shout of joy that echoed down the tunnel brought Boink running to see what was going on and together the pair began exploring the size of their find. A floor down they found no warm magma at all, revealing it to be a small magma pocket and as they went up Ragnar broke through into a large underground chamber.

A reddish glow filled the room as she entered and the walls glistened with the reflected heat. Above them on the ceiling she could see a few of the longer tree roots that had made it down through the hard-packed sandy soil above them, tunnelling to the warmth. The air was stifling in the room and when she broke through it was as if the air from the pool had rushed by her to mix with that of the tunnel. It was stale, and smelled of earth and heat, but clean enough.

For a second or two of silence the two dwarves stood in awe at the fiery lake before them, taking in the sight of the power of the earth itself. It was then that a series of bubbles rose to the surface of the lake, large and bulbous. Eight red eyes stared at them in disgust as if they'd interrupted their peace and invaded their slowly shrinking sanctuary. Three clambered out of the pool on the western side as a gout of fire appeared in one of their hands. It was hurled haphazardly at the pair of dwarves and thanks to their innate reflexes both managed to dodge out of the way.

Ragnar rolled towards them underneath the fire as it rushed past her, spattering into the stone wall behind her. Three of the fire imps lay before her and with a mighty roar she charged them. She met the first just as she passed around the northern tip, laying into it with the flat of her shovel. The imps head caved in from the force and the small body when flying to strike the wall past her. The remaining two pounced, flames enveloping them as they tried to grapple with the sturdy dwarf. Their fires seemed to have little effect on the tough dwarf though, doing little more than singe the dirt encrusted miner as she sliced about her with her spade, severing limbs left and right.

The fourth imp had breached the surface on the eastern side and it wasn't until a second fireball whooshed within a foot of her hair that Boink realised it had emerged. She looked down at her hands and saw her well used hammer and chisel and realized quickly that they'd be useless, dropping them at her feet she considered fleeing for a split second. She had no combat experience or training, no knowledge of the creature before her and no weapon but her own body against an infernal creature of fire. But in her minds eye she saw her pet, slain by the bolt of an Avar and she flew into a rage, covering the distance between them in seconds.

Her labors had hardened her more than she would have imagined and when she tackled the diminutive imp she barely registered the impact, nor the flames or heat. Rolling quickly off the stunned imp she began pounding on it's body, grabbing an arm and placing her foot on it's chest and twisting. She'd seen the wrestling move done before by her brothers but perhaps she underestimated her strength as she heard the bones snap beneath her grip. She continued her hold at the imp's eyelids opened and it howled in pain despite the burning of her hands she was now beginning to truly feel. She wrenched again and with a shattering crunch and tearing flesh she removed the arm entirely from the creature, tossing it to the ground in disgust next to her. The creature began to stir and in a fury she began kicking it. With a final kick the body flew a few feet away and the creature stirred no more. Boink sank onto her knees as her adrenaline faded and her burns became more noticeable. Blisters were already beginning to form on her palms and the smell of burnt hair began to fill the room.

Tears filled her eyes as she began to cry, but Ragnar was there at her side then, wrapping an arm around her shoulder.

"There, there lass. Ye did right well fer yerself. Let's go on back to de rooms. I think we'll be needin' a good long drink and a break after dis."

Boink allowed herself to be led back, decidedly unhappy at being attacked and burned on top of all her other problems.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 09, 2009, 05:35:21 pm**

Late Spring

Asmel trudged up the slope carrying the heavy felsite chunk of rock on her back, head bent down as she ascended. The labor was simple enough, and there was plenty of it. She had food, shelter and even a few casual acquaintances again. After the chaos she'd been through it seemed a significant gain in her mind. She shuddered again as her mind wandered back to that horrific boat ride across the ocean.

Never again.

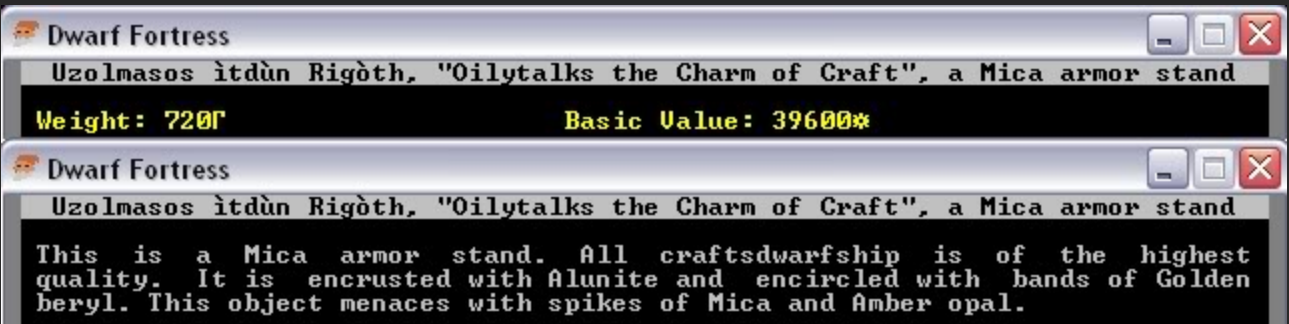
She had missed the beauties of the old world though. Halls carved, smoothed and engraved. Cities that were centuries old and perfected through labor and care. Those that weren't destroyed by ineptitude in the nobility and leadership.

A flash on insight struck her then. An image in her mind of a thing she'd seen as a child long ago. Long before she'd settled in Etagzasit.

With that image in mind she dropped her stone and ran to the nearest workshop, frantically gathering the material she would need before the image she could almost see with her eyes disappeared from her mind.

She knew where all the materials were, it only remained to bring them together in the proper method. Her burgeoning skill as a mason helped her to shape and mould the stone and though it was painstakingly slow she took care that it be perfect along every step of the way. Nearly a week later she sat, exhausted in both mind and body and stared at the perfection that lay in the stone dust before her.

It was an inspiration. A reminder of times past and times to come. That they, as dwarves, must not forget to make, to create with the hoards they gathered. Items of beauty, skill and power. Few races had such skill as the dwarves, and none could have managed such a feat as this.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2009, 01:41:23 pm**

Log of the Fortress- in the hand of Paulus Fahlstrom

Summer has arrived, and with it our human trading partners. After last year we've seen that they're well provided for. They've brought the usual and we took all that we needed. Some food and drink, but mostly bars and wood. I'm sure we'll use it eventually.

In exchange we offered them a fair trade but on top of that gave them a large quantity of goods from the avarii that they could use and were of high quality. Thesaurusaurus provided me the lists of goods traded and acquired so that I could update the records.

From what we have learned the human spearman that helped us last year with the avar ambush is called Ikim Bestratamed (also known as Fortunespooned in their tongue). We've sent along a gift for him of a fine set of large red-backed spider silk clothing taken from the avar as well as a few small bars of gold. He more than earned it. Perhaps once we get our true forges up and running we'll send him a more suitable gift.

The humans seemed pleased with our exchanges and promised to bring more of the same next year.

Khain came and visited me as well, grinning like a madman and holding a bottle of rum in her hand.

"Looks like I get all the fun jobs today."

She took a quick swig and poured some on on my right arm, the clear liquid pouring over the bolt still embedded in my upper arm.

"Give me a swig of that too."

She grinned some more, taking another swig.

"No can do. You're an invalid. Can't have alcohol. Impedes healing or somesuch. Now hold still."

Grabbing the bolt firmly she gave one swift yank. The bolt came free with a sharp pain and the blood began to flow a little. She poured a little more rum on it before taking another deep draught himself, draining the rest of the bottle and setting the empty flask next to my bed.

"Well, I better go dump this." She waved and smiled again, leaving the infirmary whistling and clutching the iron bolt.

Remarkably, my arm did feel better now that it was no longer in there, though I think I'll prefer not to have Khain as my nurse ever again.

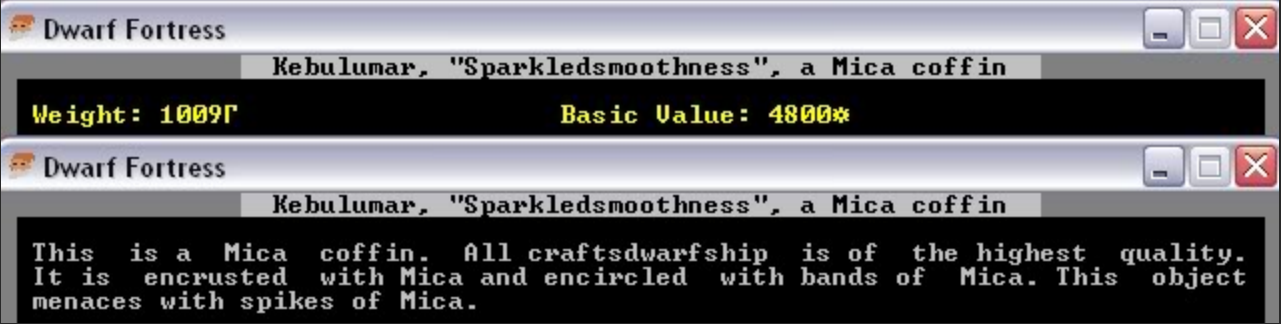
Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 10, 2009, 02:05:24 pm**

Mid-summer Journal of Led

It seems that another of our little flock has had inspiration struck. We've had two masons now in the past few months come up with brilliant ideas for items to create and it seems the first has inspired the second. Personally I suspect that my own creation had more than a little to do with this one as well, as it too is a coffin.

Morul Cattenison, recently added to our flock before my departure to Onol Lened has created a magnificent coffin. I've got plans for mine to be displayed in Mondul's temple itself but this one is also a spectacular creation. If somewhat plainer.

Still, as the name implies it's a perfectly smoothed piece of mica, with pieces cut so that no matter how you look at it it reflects the light back at you, sparkling from almost every surface and perhaps because of that it seems almost to glow. Strangely enough it only works that way for firelight and not for normal sunlight, though even in the sun it is brilliant enough. I'll provide a brief description below for the record.



P.S. As a very beneficial side-note both masons that recently made artifacts have made profound insights into their chosen profession and are on par with Glacies even. Three such talent masons will surely help speed the construction along!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 11, 2009, 03:52:56 pm**

Early fall

Draconius rubbed his hands together as he ascended the stairs towards the trade hall. The dwarven caravan awaited them there and after the insolences suffered previously Led had decided to make available the job of broker to any who wanted it at the time. It was his turn to deal with the unbelievers, the revilers of their kind.

He knew he would have to make the trade but in his mind he already knew how little he would try to offer them. As if they had the right to take their hard-earned riches for themselves! No! Despite the promise of generosity from the Hound he could not bring himself to it.

When he arrived at the Depot and inspected the wares he was even more convinced. Nothing of what they had requested had been brought. Even the merchants seemed somewhat nervous about their reception here. The Liason from last year hadn't been heard of since and it was only just before they arrived that they came upon him, still stubbornly trying to make his way back to meet with Led on the slopes outside the gates. He'd told them what had happened.

Draconius had found some of the items to be useful. He'd accepted several of the blocks made from more scarce stone, including a block of native gold and another of native celestrium. And the caravan had brought a goodly number of steel items, armor and a few weapons. And in a pair of barrels in the back he found wheels of wax-sealed cheese, another tempting find for him personally. He began trading off all the goods they hadn't needed, armor and clothing from the avar, weapons as well, those that were unneeded, as well as plenty of crafted goods that had been made. But when he proposed the deal the merchants had scoffed. And decided to make a counter offer. One had seen the copper spear that was Led's as well as the Hound's terronite chainmail and decided that they would make a good counter-offer. 20000 ingots of counter offer.

After much haggling back and forth they finally settled on things. Draconius had grudgingly given up fourteen thousand ingots in profit for what they'd obtained, but he'd managed to keep both the spear and chainmail. Of course the final gift of nearly three dozen gold bars had rankled him as well, but no one seemed willing to break the deal the Hound had made.

Perhaps next time he'd be able to cheat the merchants out of more goods... he really was getting the hang of this trading thing.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 13, 2009, 03:13:47 pm**

Thob and Fikod were both carrying granite blocks from the workshop below to the construction site on the summit. The weather above was warm, and a cool draft rose from the depths behind them as they emerged into the first hall. An odd series of clicks and noises interrupted their speech as they entered and as they looked before them they nearly panicked as a pair of large insectoid creatures rose up before them in the entryway. The creatures advanced menacingly, only to be swallowed seconds later by a pair of cunningly placed cage traps in the entryway. Still, the experience had spooked them and they raised the cry of alarm throughout the halls.

Ambush!

Insectmen are invading the fortress!

Fikod dashed outside to see if she could see more while Thob headed below to alert the others and raise the cry. Below her on the slopes she could make out more strange shapes and fled back indoors. One of them followed her swiftly making it's way through the entry into the stone corridor beyond, prey in sight. It was, perhaps, it's haste that was it's downfall, as it too suddenly found the floor beneath it fall away and though it tried to find a hold, was unable to do so, finding itself swiftly caught in like fashion to it's leader and hunting-mate.

Below the word rapidly spread and Thesaurusaurus began to grow concerned. Led was out with the liason again, vainly trying to persuade him to come inside and meet with him. The Hound, was still abed, and of the other experienced defenders only Kolok and Sarah were available. Draconius was busy whetting his throat after the trading and Glacies was sleeping. Acting quickly he ordered the four to duty, two now, the others when available and sent them above to watch the entry hall for further trouble. Wringing his hands he could only hope it would be enough.

Hefting his axe for comfort once more Kolok hurried along the hallway, just ahead of Sarah, who was walking at a quick pace behind him, armor clanking, hammer and shield in hand.

She said a quick prayer as she went, and strangely she felt comforted, though she knew the outcome was all but certain. Ahead of her Kolok slowed. There was no sign of any enemies in the entry hall except for those three caught in cages. She breathed a sigh of relief as she quickly inspected her surroundings, ensuring that their defenses hadn't in fact been breached. Their last line of traps had been set off, and it might have been possible had the rest of the group attacked she knew. But they'd been lucky. Had the entire patrol rushed their fortress they'd not have likely had such an easy time of it. They'd have had to lock down the fortress entirely and fend for themselves as they could, cleaning it out again as they were able. Not a pretty prospect.

Kolok came back from the entrance, stepping confidently around the traps.

"Looks like the rest o' dem are holed up on the slope just below the stoneworks on the north side."

A sudden fear gripped Sarah's heart. Led was out with the Liason. Were they perhaps waiting in ambush for him? Had they been sent to kill him?

That thought steeled her heart and with a sudden icy rage she took her first step towards the entryway.

"It's time to go kill some bugs, Kolok. You with me?"

He merely grinned, testing the edge of his avar axe with his thumb. "Aye. Let's go have some fun."

The pair emerged into the sunlight outside on the slope. The bright light glinted of a few pieces of mica strewn on the slopes below and for a second they adjusted their eyesight to the bright light. That second was all it took for one of the insectoids below to take notice of them and, whirling began his rapid ascent on six of his legs. Scything chitinous blades emerged from behind arms where they'd been tucked and it's mouth clicked furiously. Kolok and Sarah were fortunate to have the advantage of elevation. It gave them the time they needed.

Still, the insect ascended incredibly fast and as it advanced it began to crouch slightly, springing up at Kolok as it neared him. He was almost ready for it but was still surprised by it's speed. It landed nearly on top of him but he managed a swift blow with his axe, that, to his regret, bounced off the chitinous plate. Sarah stepped in then, giving it a hefty blow that crumpled one of it's legs in a squelching noise, sending greenish ichor flying in all directions.

Nonplussed it arose, clacking furiously as it dove legs down upon Kolok, trying to penetrate his heavy armor. He tried to fend it off as best he could but a blow from his blind-side slipped through, cutting into his arm, tearing through the flesh. It could have been worse. Ignoring it Kolok yelled out, bringing his arms together and pushing up, sending the bug flying off of him, allowing him to stand. It attacked back, scoring yet another minor wound against the hardened fighter, as Sarah scored another hit against it, snapping off one of it's chitinous blades.

Kolok struck out now with his axe, severing a limb from it in the process but it seemed to feel little pain from it, striking out at the dwarf again, pinning Kolok to the ground. The others' attention was caught by the fighting now and in the din of battle Sarah could make out the sounds of more of them making their way up. The insect on Kolok was grappling with him now, and had managed to pry the axe out of his hands when a hefty blow from Sarah took it in the back, collapsing it momentarily on the stunned dwarf beneath it. Kolok managed to squirm out from beneath it in time to look up and see the trio of rapidly ascending bugs.

"We're in deep now, Sarah!"

"Aye, I know. Shut it and fight!"

One of the three zeroed in on Kolok as if they sensed that with his weapon not pinned beneath their prone fellow he was less of a threat. Kolok was no match for the speed of the insect and quickly found himself beneath it, fighting for his life, striking out with his steel gauntlets as the creature searched for weaknesses.

The other pair advanced more cautiously on Sarah, who stood over their prone companion and was administering it the final rites with a hasty zeal. She didn't want it rejoining the fight. She knew they couldn't survive those odds. Two on one wasn't even quite to her taste when she was the one and they were eight feet tall carnivorous insects bent on her consumption. One of them lunged for her and she managed to dodge, deflecting it's attack off her shield. The other rushed by, scoring a minor hit on her arm, causing it to begin bleeding lightly. Nothing serious, she thought as she brought her hammer back down onto the torso of the prone insect, shattering it's carapace and sending ichor flying over the battlefield.

She spared a glance at Kolok, seeing him give the insectoid a wicked looking uppercut that would've dazed almost any dwarf and nodded. He was fending well enough. Turning her attention back to the insects attacking her she nearly missed blocking an attack with her hammer as the bug rushed in to swipe at her. The other was circling off to her left and looking for a better angle. Realizing her peril she shouted and charged the one nearest her, hoping to overpower it quickly. Her hammer connected with it's arm and after a brief instant of reistance she saw it break with a satisfying crack, flying off a little ways. The insect recoiled slightly and she pressed her attack further, crushing it's front leg while deflecting it's other arm off her shield. She drew back again, smashing into the creature from the other side, knocking it to the ground and exultant began advancing on it to finish it when a sudden violent force knocked her to the ground from behind and a sharp pain in her shield arm nearly brought tears to her eyes.

She looked over and saw the chitinous blade retract from her arm and as she rolled to avoid another attack her arm flopped uselessly at her side, her shield had already been stripped off of it. Clutching her hammer she looked desperately at Kolok and to her dismay saw him clutching at his leg, blood flowing freely from between his fingers. The insect that stood over his had the broken remains of his chain shirt in it's arm. Smaller injuries covered his body and blood flowed freely.

She nearly despaired then but bringing herself around she invoked Mondul's name on her lips and steeled herself to fight the uninjured insectoid in front of her. It was too fast for her to flee and without her shield she couldn't afford to strike out too often lest she leave her

own defenses wide open. She allowed herself to be backed towards where she'd last seen Kolok, fending off strikes as she could. The blood coating the ground as she approached was not a good sign, small pieces of his chainmail glinted redly where they lie. She spared a glance behind her for him but even as she did so her foot slipped on a piece of loose scree and the insect, seeing it's opportunity pounced on her, driving her to the ground. She saw it's maw descending towards her chest in a flash and as she struggled against it it's mandibles closed around armored flesh. Pain erupted but less than she had expected and with a gasp she drew breath, even as the insect tore away her chain shirt, broken links spraying both.

In a panicked flash she knew she could not survive another such bite, surely anything that could bite through steel chain would do worse to unprotected skin and with renewed zeal she threw the creature off herself, rising to her feet once more.

She heard a sudden rallying cry that was welcome to her ears and she saw dwarves streaming out of the corridor, clad only in their work clothes and wielding no weapons. Mosus, Thob, Asmel even Oddbodd, not a follower at all came charging out in a group. The injured insectoid was slowly rising to it's legs but the unarmed throng fell upon it, wrestling the seemingly indomitable insect to the ground, doing their best to kill it. Behind her she heard Led's call and she again began fending off attacks, permitting herself to be backed slowly down the slope. As she came even with her lover she could see him struggling as well with the insectoid that had been attacking Kolok. Where he was she did not know. Taking heart in each other's presence they fought, separated by twenty feet and two gigantic insects.

She could see now the bug was tiring, already it's motions were becoming slower. Led's was already almost torpid, the exertion from wrestling with Kolok and then the high priest having worn it out dangerously. Behind her she saw a shaft, dug for the foundation of Mondul's temple and a vicious swipe that nearly took her in the leg sent her diving for it. The blessed cool and dark of the earth surrounded her, comforted her and the bug followed her inside. To her astonishment after only a short ways she backed into a large object and looking quickly around she saw it to be a nearly full-grown tree. The corridor was too narrow with it for her to pass and grimly she turned to confront the bug, knowing full well only one of them would emerge from this place. It pounced, seeing her position and in the darkness they grappled. Pain filled her being as she was cut and tumbled but stubbornly she clung on and gradually she could feel the insect weakening, strength draining from it. Something lizuid oozed down her face as she extricated herself from the nearly unconcious insect and raising her hammer above her head brought it down with finality.

Her injuries and pain nearly overwhelmed her there but with determination she fled out of darkness, back to her home.

Draconius heard the din as she finished her drink hastily, withing the froth from the fine dwarven beer from her mouth as she headed towards the equipment room. Grabbing the copper mace she quickly donned her armor as best she could, running up the stairs two or three at a time and emerging into the dim first hall light at a run, albeit somewhat out of breath. By the time she exited their home it was immediately obvious that the scrum in front of her was in trouble. The insect was badly wounded already, but the dwarves were tiring as well, four of them locked on to the insect in order to keep it as immobile as possible. They'd managed to rip off it's wings and break an arm, in addition to the damage that appeared to have been inflicted with a hammer but they seemed to be making little progress. Undaunted, she waded in swinging with her heavy mace, striking wherever she could until the insect had been slain, leaving the dwarves gasping for breath on the ground, exhausted.

Mosus informed her that Led still struggled on the slopes below and, concerned, Draconius quickly dashed off, spotting him in the loose rock below. Led himself was covered in small injuries and ichor but it was evident he'd fared better than the rough mob above. The insect's eye had all been gouged out and still weeped ooze, and the creature's movements had been reduced to sporadic twitching against the high priests attempts to tear it limb from limb. Several quick blows injured it further and a final hefty blow from her mace caught it in the chest, sending it flying against the cliff-side, blowing it apart in the process.

((Nasty, Nasty fight. Sarah is injured, yellow wound to the upper arm, not to mention missing a body part that I'll cover in a later post perhaps. Kolok has a red leg wound and crawled down into the valley below. I've not been able to recover him into a bed yet so I'm concerned for his health. Hopefully that'll happen before he dehydrates or starves. The others suffered minor injuries that healed reasonably quickly. But three of my better fighters are now injured, perhaps for a long time to come still. Wrestling insectoids is a futile thing. Though many of the cultists are now much more skilled in fighting. Sarah herself in now a much better armor user due to the constantly being attacked. And she's now a hammerdwarf as well. Draconius and Sarah also earned titles that I'll go over in a future post. Unfortunately all the fighting occured on a hill-side so the screenies weren't very good.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 13, 2009, 06:30:58 pm**

"Will he be all right d'ya think?"

"Hard ta say. Leg's in bad shape, septic and infected too."

""E looks half starved ta me."

"And dehydrated."

"How'd they find him again?"

"Heard his bull bellowing out in the valley. Went to go investigate. He musta crawled under a bush during the fighting."

"He crawled that far with that leg?"

"Musta. Can't see any other way. Had it not been for his pet he'd likely have died before too much longer."

"By the stones those vermin are tough."

"Indeed. I've only fought them twice before this, they're a fearsome foe."

"Twice? Oh, the one you and Fre caught on the slopes."

"Aye, and once before. A siege in Onol Lened."

"These things siege? Gah, that's disgusting."

"It's not so bad. We'll have to get Pete and Khain to get working on proper armor though. It's a necessity."

"True dat. Thing bit right through my chainmail. Glad it wasn't me arm."

"Still you did well for yourself. You deserve the title."

"Thanks... but still, seems funny."

"Aye, that's the way of these things. You were defending our home against thieves, both yours and Draconius' title reflects that."

"Still, Sil Dal? What if I don't want to be called Sarah Atticbanners the Plane of Greed?"

"Earn for yourself another title. Draconius' is equally amusing... How would you like Draconius Jewelblockade the Contested Murk of Gold."

"Hmpfh. It's still more fitting then mine."

"Hah. Don't worry so much. It's not like you're called the Sunken Sun of Fungus or somesuch. There are worse titles to be had."

"D'ya hear about Khain."

"Oh, please tell me she's not coming back in here."

"Heh, no... She... Look, he's moving."

Kolok wearily raised his hand to his head, doing his best to sit up in bed. Spots danced before monocular vision briefly before clearing.

"Wha...? Oh, Paulus, Sarah."

There was an akward pause. "Didn't expect to see you two again."

"By the look of you when they drug you in you're lucky to been seeing Anything again."

"Aye, well. Looks like I've got you two ta keep me company now."

"Indeed, we make the fine pair the two of us. Only Paulus there is truly untouched, lucky bastard. Me and you now are like twins."

She turned to face Kolok and he could see her face for the first time since the fight. His own hand unconsciously drifted up to feel his empty left socket as he looked at her. A wicked scar ran from across the bridge of her nose, across her now whitish-red ruined orb and nearly to her ear.

He gave a low whistle. "Ye have my condolences lass. I know what it's like. At this rate though I'll wind up a crotchety old gaffer like my uncle, what was his name again... greybeard, oldbeard... something like that. Tons of old war stories but about as useful as an elf."

"At this rate Kolok, I think you'd be lucky enough to live that long. You just seem to have no luck when it comes to fighting."

"Heh, true enough. You'd better see me properly interred then, or I'm coming back to haunt ye."

Paulus and Sarah grew quickly somber.

"No, I don't think you will. But we'll see you're looked after in death, don't you worry."

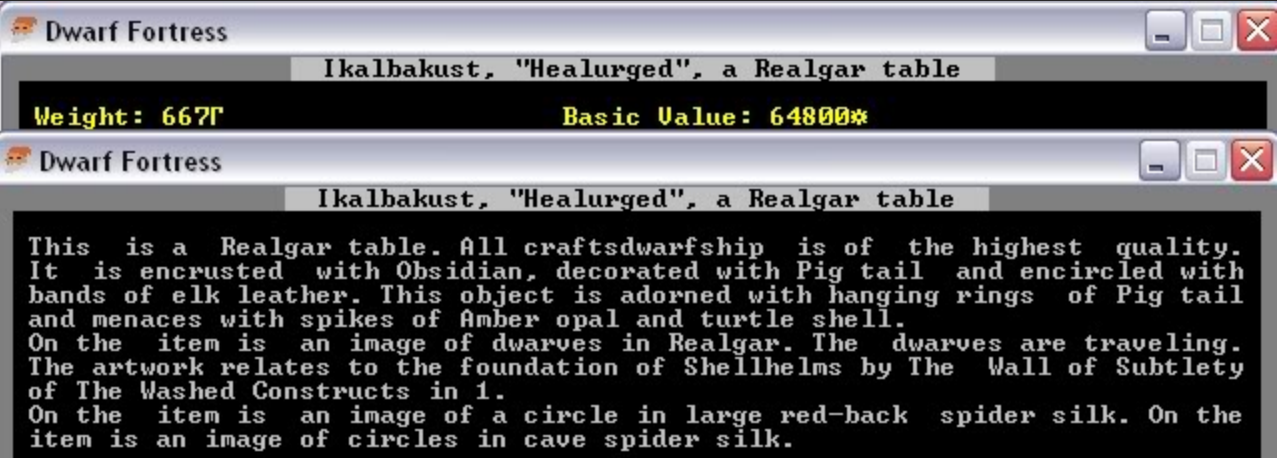
Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 14, 2009, 12:45:54 pm**

19th of Timber Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

My arm continues to improve and I can only hope that I shall soon be out of this bed. Ragnar and Boink appeared again. I've noticed their absence as had others. Led wasn't too happy with them either but it seems he's forgiven them since they dug their way into the trade hall, bursting through the very stone itself. Ragnar has informed us that the sixth hall, the forge works is ready to be cleaned up. It seems that she barricaded herself in somewhere, found the magma pocket to the south that was described and carved a shaft for it, working on the rooms in secret for some reason. I have my guesses, but I'll need to speak with her about it. And she seems to be avoiding me at the moment.

I find it a somewhat strange coincidence that Khain was possessed and supposedly has been working on a magnificent table made from realgar. I've yet to see it but it seems that his final stroke on it coincided with the exact time that Ragnar burst through the wall. Much to the consternation of the dwarves working in the fifth hall.

Thesaurusaurus brought me a rubbing of the table however and it looks impressive. The design on the top done in silk particularly interests me and I think it may shed light onto this mystery. If only I could figure out what it means.



P.S.

I've been informed another insectoid ambush made it's way to our entrance. Three of them, including the leader were caught in our traps. The remaining few were apparently chased off by Ragnar, who, according to reports 'laid waste to the survivors with such vigor' that parts were strewn in a circle of roughly fourty feet. One apparently managed to flee. At least it's good to hear signs of Ragnar's return to her old cheer.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 15, 2009, 11:39:16 am**

6th of Opal - Midwinter

We've only had mixed news of relatively minor import recently. Our excavations on the lower portions of the Temple of Mondul have uncovered both Rock crystal as well as a few small deposits of native aluminum. Both quite useful. Work continues on the upper portions as well, but, to be honest we've had a lot of problems with attacks recently that have hampered labors. We're nearly running out of cages and I've ordered the captured prisoners set up in the 'arena'. There are over a dozen insectoid prisoners, and I'm not completely sure what to do with them all. It's practically an infestation. Recently we've had a few goblins try to pinch a few things as well. Most were caught but a few were scared off before they made it to the traps. Oddbodd even accidentally chased a tigerman thief into the traps. He was uncovered near the door and for a few seconds they were both fleeing in the same direction.

In less fortunate news, Kogsak, Kolok's venerable bull and the animal that, quite possibly, saved his life passed away during the night. The beast simply lay down next to his bed and didn't get up in the morning. We've designated a coffin for it in the Crack. At least Kolok looks like he's on the mend.

((Rock salt? surely your temple is blessed. Not in years of playing DF have i ever actually come across the stuff (to the best of my memory. i've never build crystal glass at least), and you find it under the middle of the temple? A good omen i think.))

((Two good omens ironically. Ragnar's mining for the secret shrine to her god uncovered a small pocket of it as well, but it's not publically known. But yeah, this is the first time I've ever actually seen the stuff. Before it was only the stuff of dreaded MANDATES... shudder. Dorenemal had one of the nobility that liked it. Tarin's wife I believe.))

1st of Obsidian year 8

The goblin inside the cage rattled it's dagger against the bars as Thob approached. He knew they would behave if he went up to the cage. It meant a long and slow death by starvation otherwise. It was the unspoken agreement. Food would be given as long as they were not attacked in it's delivery. Of course spitting, taunting, intimidation, shouting and many other less savory things were fair game. Thob didn't much like feeding the prisoners.

Few did.

But she didn't expect to see the goblin she was bringing food to to be grinning. It wasn't a pleasant sort of grin either. A sudden noise behind her made her turn. A half dozen or more goblins were standing in the entry way, one with an axe, several with crude iron spears, ranging out on the sides of her. Cutting off any form of escape but up the unfinished structure. She screamed, a shrill warning to those within earshot and turned, hurtling the stone bowl with food to one side, fleeing from the threat. They closed in without mercy, iron spears pinning her down as the leader placed one foot on her hip and laughed as he cut into her, silencing her and sending her to her goddess.



The goblins continued to laugh as they tormented her bleeding body, but a shout from the goblin in the cage brought their attention around. A dirt covered dwarf carrying a gleaming silver-white spade had entered the temple. Three of them loped off, two speargoblins and a wrestler to deal with the civilian while the rest had their sport.

Ragnar watched them come.

The speargoblins led, trying to bring their weapons to bear against her sharp spade. She casually deflected one spear up as she rushed the goblin, and then whipped the blade end around catching the goblin in the throat with it, severing it's head in one swipe. Reversing it quickly she struck at the wrestler that was already mid-leap trying to tackle her. The blow struck true, breaking it's neck and reversing it's direction, sending the bloody corpse flying upwards at an angle to strike a wall. The third speargoblin was already too close to back out easily now and tried to keep it's spear between it and the dirty menace but Ragnar batted that weapon aside easily, spade whirling in a quick circle as she clove into him. The first strike severed an arm, the second a leg before the third caught it from underneath in the gut sending two pieces of it flying, part of it landing on the walkway of the floor above.

The guard and his remaining lackeys by now were advancing towards the dangerous dwarf through the set cages. Ragnar saw them and waited calmly for them. The only exit was through her. The guard charged as did she and breaking her silence she yelled out a charge.

"Doooooooooooooreeeeeeeeeeneeeeeemaaaaaaaaaaal!"

They met with a clash of weapons near the Olivine pillar but the goblin quickly realized he was overmatched. She parried his blow, catching him in the jaw with the shaft of her spade on the return. His second clumsy blow she simply sidestepped, thrusting out with her spade, cutting deep into his upper leg. Blood welled from the wound swiftly and his momentum was lost. Two seconds later he'd lost three other appendages besides. The remaining goblins tried to flee, to make it past her but it was her turn to laugh as she took joy in the slaughter of her hated foes.



((Out of amusement I titled the first image, 'Bye Thob'. The second one was aptly named 'Hello Ragnar'))

28th of Obsidian Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

The others are holding the burial ceremony for Thob in these final moments of the year. Such losses among us are unfortunate and with such an uncertain future for all even a single absent dwarf is noticeable. It's one less person helping, one less pair of hands helping build the temple. One less friend, or sister. I didn't know her well, but a few of the others did. And after her funeral they shall all celebrate

together in Fre's cantina.

Erith, the jeweler and miner had to clear out a few of the zombie cave swallowmen that were plaguing the area around the burial site. Four of them had been moving closer to our position of late. I'm feeling better and I truly hope to be out of bed here shortly. I've been almost a year abed recovering from those damnable wounds. I've caught up on paperwork and have entered the yearly report in the fortress records.

So here's to a new year of me moving around!



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 17, 2009, 05:24:01 pm**

17th of Granite Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

Well, it seems that we're full of good news all around just now. Most pleasing to me personally of course is that I'm up! I grabbed a shovel, a nice High Steel one from the pile and went to go get back in shape a little. Besides, there's plenty of work yet to be done on the temple, both upper and lower. With good fortune we'll be done in a year or two. Perhaps sooner now that things are truly beginning to come together now.

The second bit of good news is that Led, in one of his brief meetings with the Liason before he passed out again, was able to get the letters of Marquee from him. They now officially permit us to sieze goods from elven caravans that are carrying suspect or contraband goods. It was with considerable pleasure then, that when the elves arrived Fath siezed the goods almost as soon as they'd laid them out to trade. After which we locked the doors on them and sealed them inside. The nightmares I've had about them are far worse than these in person, but one can never be too sure.

I was also able to get out and see people again. It was good to visit our little impromptu forges, Pete, Khain and Oddbodd busy making charcoal, smelting down the aluminum ore that was found in the temple and making brass bars. Oddbodd gets a funny look when he's working with brass... almost nostalgic. I'll have to speak with him here soon. I know he mentioned some ideas he's had about simplifying the inventory system.

Did I mention it's good to be up! I was able to claim my hammer back again, though for now I'll stick with the spade.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 17, 2009, 06:21:54 pm**

28th of Felsite

Glacies finished strapping on her shield to her arm as she ascended into the trade Hall. Led was busy this time and asked her to take care of the problem herself. It was another good test of her ability and testament that she'd begun garnering his true trust. She stepped into the small corridor and turned and locked the door behind her, hiding the key in the sandy soil at her feet, after quietly unlocking the door in front of her.

She entered the bloody Trade hall. It was truly a ghastly scene. Before her, huddled over one of the corpses crouched an elf, gnawing hungrily on what appeared to be the remains of a donkey. Hearing her he turned, bloodshot eyes focusing on the steel clad dwarf. Destroyer of minds. The madness was upon him and because she knew it the act of slaying him was made simpler. He was no longer coherent. He was also an enemy. Her steel shortsword swung into him as he charged, severing an arm, that sprayed blood further over the already soaked area. He ran towards her regardless, practically impaling himself on her straight forward thrust and died, blood bubbling out his mouth.

There was no joy in this slaughter. Only Death. Death and Madness, but that in itself was also a lesson. One that Glacies was rapidly becoming familiar with.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Frellock** on **July 20, 2009, 01:03:55 am**

((I love leaving for a while and being able to come back to quite a bit of writing. Well done, Paulus. I'm only saddened that I missed joining up in your RTD; your storytelling skill will be of great use there, though I hope you keep your main attention on the fort itself.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 20, 2009, 02:40:55 pm**

Of all the dwarves in Geshud Osod Lor knew that she was utterly unique. She smiled to herself as she went about gathering materials for her latest project. Glacies had requested a sword made. A sword of obsidian. She smiled. That was a worthy project indeed. Finding obsidian had, of course, been easy. They were mining into the side of a mountain composed mostly of the black, glassy and wonderfully sharpenable stone. And she was the fortresses' only stonecutter. She was also the only weaver, clothier, leatherworker, dyer, glassmaker and general all around crafter.

She had free run of the workshop and materials to spend her time on almost whatever trade good she felt worthwhile. Whenever they would get a new batch of rope reed cloth, or pig tail cloth it would go to adding decorations on goods they already had. The cave spider silk as well. Beautiful stuff that it was it could hardly compare with the other silks they had. The Giant cave spider silk was the best of course. Though nearly impossible to come by. The large cave spider silk was also nice, but they didn't have any of those nearby either. No, it was the large red-backed spider silk that interested her most now. She'd been thinking of it for weeks. Months really. Ever since the elven caravan had brought a tamed large red-backed spider in a cage.

She'd had a special room set aside for it and it lay quiescent, tied to a slender silk rope in the room. Most of the others didn't want to go near it, but despite all her efforts she'd not gotten it to spin a single web. Her latest idea might work though. She'd requested a prisoner, a goblin thief, and had him placed in the room. Oddbodd had done the linkages and set up a lever for her, just outside the door. It was ready, and as soon as she finished Glacies' new exceptionally crafted obsidian sword she geared up in armor and headed over there. Her mace clanged lightly on her steel greaves as she walked.

She flicked the lever and could hear a faint grinding beyond the door, then a squeal followed by some loud noises. Before she could react the door in front of her flew open and a panicked looking goblin stumbled into her, followed by a rapidly advancing spider. Without thinking she pounced upon the goblin, wrestling it to the ground. The spider, seeing it's handler attacked, reacted, spraying a thick web over the small room. As she punched the goblin in the face again, Lor couldn't help grinning. She was covered in spiderwebs, and bled from a split lip, but otherwise she was fine, and had finally managed to find a way to obtain spider silk from their pet.

Even if it did involve the use of a goblin.

She sure couldn't think of a better use for them.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 21, 2009, 06:10:39 pm**

Thesaurusaurus plonked himself down on the table against the back wall of Fre's cantina, mug in hand. The summer heat in the trade hall was always worse when it was full of traders and animals. The air nearly became stifling unless the doors to below were opened, allowing a cross breeze. It had not been a particularly good year for trade, but it wasn't like they particularly needed anything either. He sipped his cool mug of plump helmet wine, thinking.

Paulus entered the doors as well and stepping up to the bar gave a quick series of raps. Fre emerged a short while later from the back door, carrying a small flask of ale up to place under the bar. It was a favored vintage for many, but particularly some of the tall humans who wandered down when they had time off. Guard duty was a thirsty duty.

"Oi there Paulus. Good ta see you in here again."

"Aye, sorry I've missed you every time I've come since I've gotten up and about. I like what you've done to the place."

She grinned, motioning to the sign.

"See the sign? Lor made it for me special. And I had an anvil brought in too as decoration. Not like we don't have a couple sitting around."

"Indeed. It's a nice touch. I like the name you've chosen too. The Bold Anvil."

She laughed lightly. "Where the bold come to get hammered!"

Paulus chuckled as well. It was a good name for her pub.

"I'll take a rum then."

She nodded, "Rum it is." and reached below, producing a smooth obsidian goblet and filling it with a rich amber liquid before handing it to him. "On the house." She winked.

Laughing he accepted the cup and raised it to her in salute. "I appreciate it, and yer skills lass. To your health."

Neither bothered mentioning that since there was no economy per se nothing would be charged for it. People were free to order what they chose, for the time being.

Heading over to Thesaurusaurus the Hound sat down in a chair opposite.

"So, how's the trade?"

"Bah, sparse this year. The merchants complained that they got no request papers from the liason. I looked into it. Seems he's still waiting from last year. Apparently he's in line behind the dwarven liason and refuses to budge."

Paulus shook his head. "Isn't Tekkud still..."

"Aye. Still unconcious half the time from his injury with the avar. Refuses to be put in bed and by the time Led gets out to meet with him he's lapsed into unconciousness again. I don't know what ta do."

"Same... it's an unusual problem at best. Still, they brought some things right?"

"Aye, a few odd bars and some wood. Food, not that we need it right now, and other assorted clothing and trinkets, mostly useless. It's not really their fault so I was generous."

"That's fine. I'll look into this. See if there's something what can be done about it."

"Good. Bloody liason... missing a leg and all. Just no good. Stubborn as a mule."

"Perhaps we should send Kolok to deal with him then?"

The clerk laughed lightly. "Perhaps... perhaps."

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 22, 2009, 03:15:30 pm**

Fath was just wiping down the polished orthoclase counter of the bar after having arrived at work for her night shift. She didn't really mind what she did, and often tended the farms upstairs with the door to below cracked in case she was needed. But on this night she doubt she would be. The only dwarves in the bar was a trio of off duty masons relaxing in the eastern corner tables. Their mugs were nearly full and they had a small keg on the floor next to them.

They were taken care of. And judging by the fact that the keg contained some of their aging sewer brew they'd soon not have any need for anything but sleep. And perhaps a good dousing. Just because she working in the earth didn't mean she was dirty.

Snatches of conversation drifted over to her and she knew instantly what they were talking about. It had become almost habit to continue to name the chasm creatures, despite protestations from Thesaurusaurus. And proposed names were being floated across the room from the group.

"Kel...wha's the last name?"

"D'nno. How about Fellbottoms?"

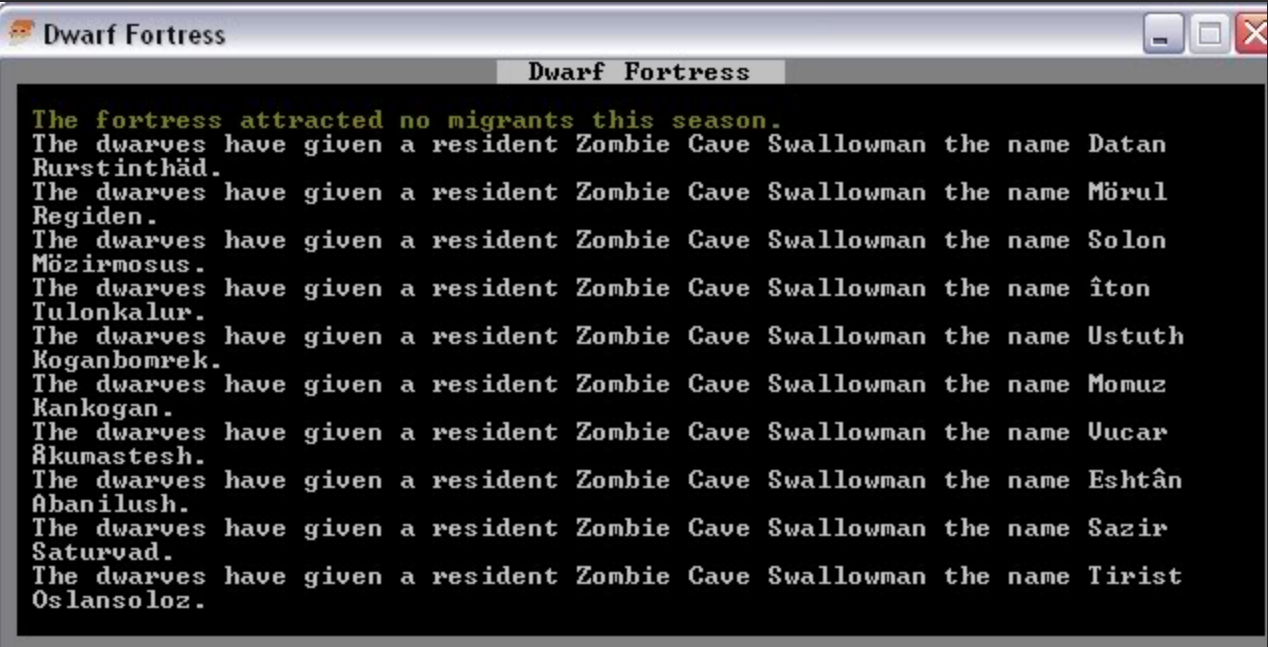
"Thunderlegs! Ish hasta be Thunderlegs!" tittered the third.

"How's Ragebrew sound?"

"Pfaw... no connection. Wha'bout Looselips?"

"Thunderchicken!" More giggling.

It sounded like they were already well into their cups and Fath left them to it, smiling as she went to plant a few sweet pod seeds and check on her first crop of Quarry bush leaves. The bluish-green leaves were covered in a soft silvery fuzz, despite the name associated with the seeds and they would be an interesting addition to their diet, diverse by trade but also lacking in fresh food.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 23, 2009, 07:01:17 pm**

27th of Malachite

Fiyopi Oarsanctums stirred on his mount, his eyes opening to view the scene before him as mortals would. The rough rock face before him had undergone a significant transformation since he'd last had this place scouted. Few of his people had ever returned and he could only assume that it was because any one of the ancient evils had awoken and returned to claim the location of their former stronghold. He'd been here for the battles that were fought on this soil, then only a squad leader. He'd fought the dead, as well as the demons in this place then and it was barely recognizeable now. Only the obsidian cliffs truly remained of the once strong lair, and they too had been worn down somewhat by time. He, however, had remained strong, and grown skilled in the use of a spear, as only millenia can do. The fortress had been consumed, the walls, now mere cliffs. The keep itself had been obliterated by the meteor, agent of the divine. It had laid waste the surroundings for miles, but nature had a resiliency that few could rival.

His wings unfurled and the rest of the squad took of formation around him. White wings shone in the sun as they advanced through the swamps, riding on mud-flecked white steeds. Creatures more powerful than horses and vastly more dangerous. The unicorns were not their beasts of burden but aided them when they requested. In respect the Avar used no saddles, no bridles, left them unshod and in their wild state. A sign of their admiration of them, though they were lesser beings.

They advanced on the fortress, unseen. The rough shape of the tower beginning to take shape. A skull. Perhaps their enemies of old had truly returned. But the dwarves that lived here were all that had been seen, and though they tolerated no undead it was yet possible they served the evil ones.

And they had slain Avar.

That alone labeled them as enemies. His soldiers surrounded the entrance. Fifteen swordsmen strong and mounted on unicorns. They should be more then match for a few dwarves on an open field of battle. It was within their halls that they truly excelled. Or so he had heard. He'd had no contact with them, or essentially any of the other races in millenia. Until the earth had been sundered anew and their bonds had been broken. All was new again and their allies of old were different now. Lesser somehow, though a few still had the inner spark a like number were also tainted and it was nearly impossible for them to distinguish the difference. It's not like they could read the minds of other races.

His soldiers flushed one of the dwarves out and the dwarf broke, strangely enough, away from the fortress. One of his soldiers cut into her as the dwarf cried out and their cover was broken.

"Ambush!"

The call went up and the dwarf paid a heavy price. In seconds his soldiers, as per his commands had left her alive but broken. Three of her limbs lay scattered on the slope around her. She had passed out from the pain, but lived still, miraculously enough. He recalled that dwarves were very tough creatures. They'd even been known to take greivous wounds and still fight for some time. His men withdrew and let the mangled dwarf on the slope lure out more of them as he withdrew to the flat ground at the bottom of the slope. He'd stood there once before, looking up at the walls after the battle. His squad had flown in from above while the elves had attacked along-side the dwarves from below. Such were different times.

He was startled out of his reverie by a dwarf that emerged from the cliff-side excavations.



They sized each other up. The dwarf appeared to be a fine specimen, though dirty from the excavations. A fiery aura surrounded her but it's origin could only be guessed at. In her hands though she held a digging implement of the finest metals the avar knew of. Anurite. Few possessed such knowledge and only dwarves would put such metal to use as a tool, but as the dwarf yelled out a battle call and charged he quickly saw that she was no novice to combat. Raising his spear in salute his wings tucked behind him again and he charged.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 24, 2009, 02:15:40 pm**

Fiyopi and the dwarf stood apart, vision locked momentarily. The avar could see a few of his squad headed his way, swords at the ready as they came to aid their leader. As if he needed it. The two opponents charged, one astride a thundering white beast, spear lowered and to the right, intent on impaling the dwarven chest. The dwarf ran, low and fast, spade tucked to one side, coiled like a spring ready to strike.

They passed one another and in the deafening silence Fiyopi could hear his heart beat, the thrill of the fight and the wind rushing through his hair. He had missed the dwarf by only a fraction, but the dwarf had no armor to catch on, allowed for speed. He wheeled, bringing his unicorn about when a wave of pain hit him. Looking back over his shoulder he saw the stumpy remains of his once magnificent wing, spurting blood, the crimson droplets forming an odd contrast against the whiteness of his feathers. Turning on the dwarf he saw her grin a cocky smile. Anger rose in him, indignation that she would dare such a thing and he determined to ride her down.

Avar and beast barreled towards the dwarf who stood calmly but resolutely in their path. The unicorn lowered it's horn and still the dwarf stood still. Only when they got unavoidably close did the dwarf's fluid strike show, a massive overhead slice with her spade, cutting into avar and unicorn alike, sending the beast tumbling into the turf, bowling into the dwarf and toppling the rider. The dwarf was up again in a flash, standing over the rising avar and with a glint off of her spade she struck, a slow broad strike that the avar was in no position to dodge. It caught him in the chest, sending him flying towards a tree. His last fleeting thought;

"How can we have fallen so low?"



His personal guard was dispatched with equal ease as another miner emerged from the excavations and together Paulus and Ragnar ascended, scattering avar and unicorn alike in a storm of fury. Five avar and unicorns lay dead before the pair gained the height where Fath lay, broken and bleeding. Led arrived shortly thereafter and seeing his injured friend dropped his spear and gently picked up the broken and bleeding figure.

While the pair of soldiers scattered the remaining avar the High Priest carried his friend down into the fortress, talking to her gently while she was awake.

"Don't worry there, Fath, we'll see you're taken care of."

"Fath, stay with me here, what's your favorite drink?"

Shock had settled into her system and though she was alive, her wounds continued to seep as he gently lay her in a bed in the infirmary. One that had been vacated by the Hound only months before. As he knelt next to her Fre burst into the infirmary, a look of wrath upon her face. She saw her assistant then, her friend and helper and broke into tears for a time, pearly drops falling down her face to fall upon the wounded Fath as she sat with her.

Led placed an arm upon her shoulder. "She'll not long be with us."

Fre angrily shrugged his arm off. "I know. I KNOW it. Gods above, don't you think I can see that! The avar left her in this state?"

Led's shoulders raised then dropped and he looked again at Fath. "Aye, though I can't imagine why. The Hound and Ragnar are out there now, securing the entrance again."

Fre sniffled once and stood. "Those bastards killed Fath. I'm going after them."

Led looked like he was about to say something, to protest, but he let it drop. Fre had not missed the motion and ground her teeth as she left to suit up.

"Don't worry. I'll use a crossbow but it will be up close and personal, I assure you. Very personal."

Led merely nodded. "Go with the Goddess."

He sat there with Fath, he did not know how long as she slowly bled out. He would have held her hand to comfort her had she still had one. The avarii swords were but iron but that had been sufficient. She shuddered and her eyes opened briefly. She looked at him slowly, then, she looked beyond him and her eyes widened. Her blood flecked lips parted and she spoke in a strained whisper.

"She comes for me now Led. What do I do?"

Led sighed and leaned in. "It is time for you to go with her Fath. There is nothing more for you here. Go in peace."

Fath smiled slightly and nodded before closing her eyes. She flinched once as if someone had touched her and she went still.

Her friend sat there with her in death.

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 24, 2009, 05:03:51 pm

Fre took a quiet breath and held it as she drew a bead on the Avar camping around a large signal fire just to her west. She'd twined grass and leaves into her clothing and beard and daubed herself with mud, giving her mottled complexion that made her difficult to see when she lay still. She released her breath slowly, adjusting her sights on her steel crossbow as she did so and held it. The unicorn knickered and for a brief second the avar moved out of her sights before settling back into position. She pulled the trigger and the iron bolt sped from her towards the avar, thumping into it's leg and pinning it to the unicorn.

She fitted in a second bolt and fired, then a third, and a fourth in rapid succession. She was aiming for the unicorn now and the skittish animal was moving about wildly at the unexpected attack and from her distance it was difficult to aim with all the undergrowth in the way. The pair moved off towards the south and Fre moved to intersect them. A ridge would be coming up shortly to the south that would give her a vantage point from which to fire on them below and gauge their movement patterns. She caught sight of them once more as they headed further into the wild growth of the lower valley and squeezed off a shot, striking the unicorn solidly, burying a bolt in it's gut.

Then she was off running, parallel to their intended path until she came to the small escarpment. Off on her right she could see the Avar and unicorn desperately trying to conceal themselves in the thick brambles and several more bolts flitted off in their direction, several of them striking true. She heard a 'fwump' and short barking noises and knew the unicorn had fallen. Picking her way quickly down she followed, seeing the pair wallowing on the ground, unicorn thrashing in pain. She almost felt sorry for the creature as she sent missile after missile into it's thick hide. Finally one caught the thrashing beast in the throat and shortly thereafter it perished, Avar still pinned by a leg beneath it.

For the humanoid she felt considerably less pity. Approaching slowly as she used the last of her bundle of bolts on it. Three struck it, only one a telling wound, in the arm as she closed in on what she discovered to be a female. The avar looked up at her fiercely, waving it's iron shortsword in defiance, despite it's loss of mobility. Her last bolt she saved as she approached, firing it deliberately into the avar's arm, shattering bone and the dwarf waded in with her bow, bludgeoning the human long past what would have been necessary, breaking her other limbs and smashing her in the face until a final blow to the head snapped her neck.

Fre unceremoniously wiped her bow off on the nearby grass and headed back to the fort. She'd need just one more bundle of bolts. There remained only one of the avar, camped quietly further down the valley. The past few days had been a blur to her, all but the last of the avar had fallen, and the one that had somehow slipped past Paulus, much to his chagrin. Not only had the avar escaped but he'd done so with Paulus' sword embedded firmly in his right side, leaving the dwarf weaponless. She herself had killed ... she had lost count. Six? Seven?

Led had asked once when she came in for a night how the fight went. She'd gotten two that day. Her reply was a curt shake of her head.

"It's not fighting I'm doing now. It's killin'. They don't deserve a fight after what they've done."

He had merely nodded solemnly.

One more and then life would return to normal.

In her heart she knew there was no such thing.

Fortress log, 6th of Galena In the hand of the High Priest

The avar trouble us no more for a time. Fre has seen to that. Ragnar and to a lesser extent, the Hound, saw that the ambush was thwarted. And even Draconius and Glacies tracked down an avar that had hidden itself in our excavations. But it was Fre that distinguished herself above and beyond ordinary service. She has been awarded the rank of Hero for her exceptional skill with a crossbow, and has, I believe been granted special dispensation from Mondul to be her Hunter, rather her Huntress. Where the Hound is Her servant against the undead, the Huntress shall be it for the living.

We have also bestowed upon her the title of Fre Kubukonul Tellistinash Izeg, or the Infallible Organ.

According to her new position we've requested that she assume the position of Sheriff/Captain of the Guard. Those that wish to train under her supervision may now do so as long as they don't neglect their other duties.

With Fath's passing we are now only nineteen. It leaves a lot of work for so few and I've not heard from any of the others in the mountainhomes for some time. I fear that someone has either intercepted our messages or something more dire has happened.

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on July 27, 2009, 03:07:59 pm

Mid-Limestone

The heavy dwarven wagons rumbled and swayed as they made their way across the rough landscape to the fortress of Geshud Osod. The guards were wary. For good reason. According to reports from the human traders a large band of Avar were seen moving in this direction. Evidence of a battle outside the entrance was still visible as they approached and for a second they were hesitant to enter until they saw a miner heading outside to work in the lower excavations.

Trade was reasonable and the dwarves of Geshud Osod gave them some very useful items. And a considerable amount of obviously elven gear, something that fetched a reasonable price but wasn't particularly useful. Best of all were the impressive weapons, swords, short-sword, maces, and axes, clearly of foreign make. Some of them were even decorated with strange designs or symbols and were suspected to be of avarii make. The smiths in the 'homes would likely want to examine them.

The dwarves of the fortress were likewise in a reasonably good mood, sharing drink and food in the Cantina, though they made the traders pay for it. It was, at the least, a very enjoyable place to eat and socialize. It seems that two of their number that had been wounded were on the mend, one, a miner, had recovered completely. The other, their woodcutter, was improving as well.

And though the liason was still here and alive he was not in good condition.

Still, it would be a decent year, if not a great year for trade and the merchants were content.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 28, 2009, 01:50:17 pm**

24th of Sandstone

Fre rolled a massive keg carefully down the ramp towards the forgeworks. It took her a while longer to get it down the stairs into the Forghall itself but once she got close Ragnar helped her out and together the pair easily brought the full barrel of aged dwarven beer into the room. A soft reddish glow lit the place from the outside edge and the temperature was comfortably warm. An upper shaft vented the place into the chasm so that smoke was not a problem and a series of pristine workshops and forges graced the outer rim of the place.

Only a few minutes later Oddbodd, Pete, Khain and Paulus arrived, and a few minutes after that, Boink. Oddbodd, Pete and Khain looked by far the most pleased with the prospect of a true magmaworks up and running. But they all drunk to the hard work, particularly of Ragnar, and Boink, who had done the lions share of getting the magma flowing. Storage rooms occupied the three floors above them, each with a single shaft leading into the lower rooms for dumping of waste, directly into a side channel of the magma. The rooms immediately above would be the precious metal storage and a crafting hall for metalcrafters to decorate things. Above that would be the storage hall for ores and flux. Above that the crafts hall for jewelers and leatherworks, as well as clothiers. The original craftshall would still be used for the other assorted trades, mostly used by Lor.

They raised their mugs in toast and clinked the stoneware together before drinking half and tossing the rest into the magma as christening. The flames billowed briefly as the alcohol was consumed and a rich burnt smell filled the room as they filled their mugs again to chat. Almost all of those in attendance were not followers of Mondul but nonetheless this was their home and such a project would be a great boon to all.

Plans were made between all of them to get it up and running properly as they were able. There were still several exposed veins of metals outside that could be quickly mined out and brought in to smelt, and they'd traded for a considerable amount of metal already. In addition, with the smelters powered by magma it made it economical to begin melting down some of the metal armor and inferior weapons that the other races had brought. It would certainly be enough to keep both the miners and the three metalworkers busy.

As the festivities were winding down Oddbodd took Paulus to one side in a quick whispered conversation.

"I've got some things to ask you, Paulus."

"Ask away."

Oddbodd nodded briefly. "Ya see, I've got some ideas for things that might make things easier for us around here. There's not very many of us and if I, ... we can devise things that would simplify work it makes sense to do it, right?"

Paulus raised an eyebrow and nodded. "I see your point. Go on..."

"So, one of the first I'd like to try out is a machine that can help with our inventory reports."

"What do you mean by help?"

"Well, based on my designs... it should be able to keep a running total of the fortress stocks. Someone would have to add and take away things manually when they need to be entered but it should provide a running inventory of things used and things available once it's set up to do so."

"Sounds interesting. I'll approve the materials you need for the prototype, but run the designs by me first."

Oddbodd, rubbed his hands together. "Thanks. This should really help out."

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Maggarg - Eater of chicke** on **July 28, 2009, 02:30:02 pm**

I'm glad to see Paulus is cautious, dwarvish computers tend to be quite dangerous.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 30, 2009, 04:24:40 pm**

Year end report- Fortress records- year 15 9

It has, without a doubt been a full year. Only one of our number still remains injured, though we've lost one as well to the incessant attacks. Our liason Tekkud still works on bringing himself back into the fortress proper and refuses any assistance, the stubborn mule.

In late moonstone two avar ambushes were spotted to the north of us, running afoul the undead mountain goats that infest this place like cats. Ok, maybe not quite like cats, but still. Better them then us.

The goats that is. That makes three full squads of avar and unicorns we've spotted here recently. We've declined to engage them at all, for obvious reasons, though one of the avar, a scout, presumably, did approach some of our recent external excavations. In light of our recent opening of the forges we miners have unearthed some of the exposed veins in the slopes of the valley to our immeadiate south. Just two veins netted us over a hundred bars worth of gold ore as well as a few odd gems, like red zircon and amethyst. A smaller cluster of supposed ore turned out to be merely a small deposit of pyrite, though it too is pretty enough.

Needless the say the scout was quickly chased down. I didn't appreciate his interference and took the time I needed to tell him about it.



The end of the year passed quietly enough, with the usual festivities, but without the usual bloodshed.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 31, 2009, 05:27:13 pm**

17th of Felsite

We have received immigrants!

Well, really, it's just one. And really it's just Der Kartoffel. Apparently he had set out with a small group from Onol Lened, nearly five of them, but it seems he's the only one that survived the dangerous journey. He was made welcome here and seemingly embraced the worship of Mondul before coming. He's taken over Fath's place as Fre's assistant, since he worked in the food industry previously. That and she's been needing someone.

It's still a shame we lost Fath. We thought she might pull through for a while when Led recovered her. Oddbodd even offered to work on a spring-loaded stool for her to use while keeping an eye on the tavern for Fre, just in case someone got out of hand. But some things just don't quite work out as expected. I guess the five that left with Der Kartoffel learned that lesson as well.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **August 01, 2009, 07:26:53 am**

((how on earth did you manage to get one migrant? any other time i've got a low popcap set, yet come in under it I usually get full sized immigration, depending on the situation of my fort (20 migrants if its a boomtown somtimes)))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Final Fort starts @ pg 30, inquire within!)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 03, 2009, 04:40:14 pm**

((To be honest Pete... I have no idea. I was actually hoping for a few more. I'm well familiar with the, oh I need one more for my pop. cap, oh look, here comes an immigration wave of 27! (My current record high) Still, it's one more and I'm sure we'll have another death here eventually that'll trigger another immigration. I was really hoping for more male immigrants and to be able to start introducing more characters and story with the increase. Ah well. Perhaps I'll bump up the cap here in a while and see how badly my FPS get's hit. It's around 40 right now, on a fast computer. 25 on my laptop. Of course, you'll see some of the reasons for that in the post below.))

Journal of the High Priest. Summer, year 10

I was, of course, saddened by the loss of so many of our followers as they travelled en route to this place, but have interviewed Der Kartoffel and find him to be a strangely calm and deliberate dwarf as it regards worship. I looked into the food supply he would find a new niche in and found out some very interesting things. In our chats I came to realize the exact state of food affairs. With the number of dwarves we have we currently have drink to last us nearly 10 years and food enough for the same. We also have little to no room to store it. Though we've got farms, they're not really needed at the moment and our animal breeding program has gotten somewhat out of control. We have chickens, sheep and horses tied up by the dozens or caged as exhibition animals. We've got nearly a hundred creatures. They already outnumber us five to one! This will end. I can understand a few, for food purposes, but with the existing pets it should be sufficient. I'll be working on eliminating the animals as soon as I am able.

Draconius seemed eager to serve Mondul and I've asked him to take care of the elves this year. Or should I say elf. Singular. After their incarceration one of them went bezerk and slew every other living thing in the room, animals included. When Draconius stepped in the elf was madly gibbering to himself. Until he brained it in the head. It wasn't much of a fight but it occurred just in time to get the place cleaned up for the human caravans, who are used to us having piles of things lying around.

Work on the temple has been somewhat slow of late. Everyone has been busy bringing in the mined out veins lately, and then clean-up and trade preparations, not to mention getting the forges running. I'll have to prod Glacies to get her crews back to work. I'm told the miners have nearly finished the outside of the quarry and will only need to 'carve out' the temple from the underside for it to be finished.

We've also had a few incidences with intruders again. At one point we nearly had a squad of avar run into a ambush of insectoids to our north but unfortunately for us they managed to avoid one another. Just barely. I'd still have put my money on the insectoids. Even if they were outnumbered 2.5 to 1. Kolok remains abed, though he's the only one, not including that idiot of a liason. I've half a mind to wall him in while he's unconcious.

Lor has been happy with his discovery of how to milk the tame large red-backed spider we have and I've allowed all the goblin thieves to be turned over to him for that use. In any case, they've probably got the bones and chunks cleaned out of the butchery by now so it's time for me to get back to work. As soon as that is done I'll get to processing the unused bone inventories. That is what I really long to get back into.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 04, 2009, 02:58:27 pm**

Journal of the High Priest, summer, year 10

I've got a few minutes again to jot down the occurances lately. It seems that the insectoid ambush spotted earlier was the back-up force for several insectoid spies that have been trying to infiltrate our home. I still don't know what to do with them all as they're quite dangerous and we've now got nearly twenty of them.

On the bright side the human traders have arrived again, and though their liason is still here it's always good to see them. I've asked Thesaurusaurus to handle trading this time around, though from what I saw in their wagons they had little useful. We certainly don't need more food right now.

Speaking of which, I've finally cleared out the back-log of butchery orders and have taken care of our animal infestation problem. We now have only the five or so pets, the tamed Cougar, Black bear and large red-backed spider and about four dogs in case we need a little additional defense. I'll ask Kolok to train them properly once he's up again.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 07, 2009, 04:34:17 pm**

Oddbodd whistled as he worked. He was ecstatic to be working on his invention and that he had authorization to pull from the clan talent pool helped tremendously. The workshop he now stood in had, in fact, been carved out of the living stone by Sarah and Ragnar to his exact dimensions. Paulus had helped to fashion bins and bins of mechanisms, varying by size and gear ratio which lay, stacked in bins near the entrance. Lor, the stonecarver, had been busy as well, and would remain so for quite a while helping him create exactly what he needed. He looked at his unfinished work. There remained so much to be done still.

The rudimentary fashionings were already there though the four gear trees upon which all his calculations and designs hinged had already been constructed. There remained connecting everything and testing it out, section by section to ensure that the results were what he wanted. He'd need to test turn speed, size and weight ratios of the measuring beads, shear force of the gears so they wouldn't be accidentally stripped, and half a hundred other things. But he was doing it. He'd seen the work of other mechanics before, including the half-mad creation of the waterbore. But this was his first true creation and he felt in it a certain pride. A certain sense of being able to come up with an idea and actually creating it.

A long thin sheet of worked iron lay coiled loosely in one corner. There was the key to it all. He'd heard of such things before, but as he had no other power source available to him at the moment he'd have to settle on clock-work devices. They had their advantages. But also their disadvantages. They would have to be continually kept up and wound and he'd never before created such a large mechanism involving one before.

Still, it was a challenge. Better yet, it was his challenge. And one he felt would be worthwhile.

He selected another gear from the bin, yes, a microcline one. He knew few appreciated the peculiar hue of the stone, but behind the walls no one, except those that dared enter the guts of his creation would see it. And the stone itself held many desirable qualities. Reasonably lightweight, yet hard enough to not crumble. Obsidian, of course, had the opposite problem. It was extremely hard but also tended to be overly brittle and had issues with shattering if it was struck just wrong. All of these things he would have to take into account.

Carefully he consulted his sketchings and placed it in position, fetching another one, and then a third before connecting them in series. He tamped them in place with a leather covered wooden mallet, ensuring a snug fit and spun the first of the series. It turned, albeit slowly, while the last gear, owing to it's smaller size spun much faster. Exactly ten times faster according to his calculations, but he made a chalk mark on one of the tines of each and timed it exactly, for no less than a thousand revolutions. It was off a little, but not by much and he made a quick note on one of his drawings. He would have to pick out the right mechanisms later to account for that error. There was so much to be done still but he would finish it. It would work, he knew.

He'd get this thing working, or die trying.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **ousire** on **August 07, 2009, 10:21:21 pm**

gotta love the mad science

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 11, 2009, 03:25:23 pm**

Lor grinned as she tightened her chain shirt in place, cinching it around her waist with a leather belt, just below that of the chain pants she also wore. It wasn't often that civilians were required to don such protective gear, but her line of work had taken on a surprising addition.

Silk manufacture.

She walked through the doors in the back of the second hall, past the butchery, dump and additional food storage rooms. A small orthoclase door led to a surprisingly large room, with sandy walls, floor and ceiling. The roof of the room sloped gently upwards, domed and supported with curved beams anchored to supports on the sides. The floor around the edge of the room had dozens of ropes attached to metal spikes, driven into the floor. Only four dogs occupied the entirety of the structure now, where once horses, chickens and sheep had overbred. Those animals were, even now, being prepared as foodstuffs. The meat had been salt-cured and packed in barrels. The salt trade was heated in the area, with local salt barons set up near the sea, or occasional deserts with salt-pans. A dwarven fortress, built by a different tribe, had purportedly set up a salt mine somewhere deep in a jungle, and most of the salt the dwarves used came from there, either directly or indirectly.

Lor strode calmly through the dogs, who lept up at her vying for her attention. But it wasn't for these that she gird herself. Another small door tucked into the back of the enclosure, just beyond the dogs led into a much smaller room. One that had only a single lever in it, aside from another door opposite where she entered. She passed through that portal as well, entering a mid-sized room. A sudden chittering sound filled her ears as she entered and a large red-backed spider advanced upon her. It slowed as it got closer and she stood still, letting it's front legs paw her momentarily before the spider seemed content that she was a friend. She breathed a sigh of relief at that. It Had been elven-trained after all. She locked the door behind her and placed the key on a shelf next to the large stone-frame loom that rested in the corner. A goblin thief stood alert in a cage in the other corner but, ignoring him, she calmly untied the spider from it's stake.

The spider had another rope around it's neck just in case, but she doubted now that it would be needed. She rapped on the door twice and the faint scuffling of feet on sand could be heard beyond the door before a grinding filled the room. The cage sprang open and she charged the goblin before it could get it's bearings. The spider was almost faster. It too charged and in a flash sprayed the corner of the room with a sticky web, catching the goblin unprepared. Lor pounced on it and the two fought, with occasional interruptions from the spider who continued to spray webbing over them and, from time to time, lunged in to bite at the goblin. The poison and struggle found their mark soon enough and the goblin died with Lor's hands wrapped around it's throat. Whether by poison or suffocation it was hard to tell.

Lor stood slowly, careful to not disturb the sticky webbing more than necessary and gathered in a handful, heading towards the loom. She cautiously patted the spider on it's hairy abdomen and left it then to it's feast. No reason to waste fresh food. She continued to gather the webs until the room had been cleaned of them and a small pile of -large red-backed spider silk cloth- lay carefully folded on the floor next to her. It was tiring work and she needed sleep but she wouldn't change her vocation for the world.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **August 11, 2009, 09:34:20 pm**

((eww, redback spiders. Good thing dwarves don't have outdoor toilets for those things to hide in I guess))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **ousire** on **August 12, 2009, 12:23:12 am**

hehe. goblin wreslin for fun *and* profit!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 12, 2009, 04:54:26 pm**

15th of Malachite, year 10. Mid-summers day

Paulus tramped up the steps, squinting slightly at the bright light streaming from the entrance to their home. It was warmer up here than below, or at least warmer than most of the rest of the fortress. The forge-hall was heated, even up through four floors so that the crafts rooms were consistently warm. The forge area itself was always sweltering hot, and it wasn't uncommon for Pete, Khain or Oddbodd to emerge from the depths glistening with sweat. Had there been children they might have played a game of helping with the forges before running as fast as possible outside and diving in the snow. They'd done that back at Dorenemal. But then, Dorenemal had been a family-friendly fortress, a place for a people to call home and feel welcome and secure. Geshud Osod had no such inclination. A place of death was rarely a place you want to raise a family. Besides, there were no couples, and no children here. And with so few men around those that had lovers tended to be very discreet.

Paulus shook his head again as he approached Fre, standing watch at the entry.

"Ho there. How're things?"

"Hai Paulus. You're early. My shifts still on for another hour at least, not that I've checked too much. This blasted heat always gets to me

when I'm wearing so much steel."

"Heh. I understand. It's been unseasonably warm lately. I see you've got the Hammer with you today."

"Oh, aye. If I were above I'd have me bow, but here I've got little distance and besides, I figure I could use a little practice bashing things with something designed for it."

Paulus merely nodded. "Any activity?"

Fre shrugged. "Little. Had an insectoid spy pop up a little while ago. One of the pets came close enough to smell it. Darn sheep began bleating. Must have scared the creature off. Lucky it didn't kill the critter before-hand though."

"It's not like we need more of them in our cages."

"True, but it's not very exciting just standing watch."

Paulus nodded. He knew well enough. He'd stood more than his fair share here at the entrance, but with the merchants below there was always an increased risk that something had followed them in. They heard footsteps behind them coming up the stairs and both turned to see who it was. Morul appeared, and headed to the animal stockpile to re-organize the cages in preparation for an internal wall to be built. A loud crack brought their attention back around and they had just enough time to see a stone swinging downwards from the floor, an Insectoid squad leader trapped within.

"Ambush!" Fre called out, drawing her hammer as she spotted another of the creatures entering through the gates. Paulus too drew his and they advanced on it, meeting it just past the cage traps. The bug managed to get in a wicked slice on Fre before her hammer caught it in the side, shattering it's arm. Her chainmail shirt protected her from the worst of it, though it tore through a few of the links and left a shallow stinging cut on her side. Paulus' thrust caught it in the chest, knocking it up a few inches before sending it crashing into the ground. It was hurt but not out and Fre moved in for a more decisive blow. She swung in hard as it rose from the ground chittering and it connected with it's upper torso flinging it into the air spinning away from them to skid to a stop, unmoving near where the sun played across the smoothed stone of their entrance.

The pair regarded it coolly and returned to their positions, just as another pair of creatures popped through the side doors. They advanced instantly on the dwaves but only one made it that far as the other fell, into another pit trap beneath it. The second was set upon by Paulus and Fre, now somewhat warmed up and after a feeble defense Paulus' blow reduced it to a quivering pile, ichor oozing out through a half dozen cracks.

Their defenses relaxed somewhat as no more enemies appeared.

"Think there's more?"

"Should be, that's only four right?"

"By my count. The others must have been lagging behind, or searching another section of mountain. Anyone outside?"

"No one that I can think of."

Morul, having heard the commotion decided it was safe enough to begin clean-up and headed out to the entrance to recover the body of the first one. Seconds later she was being chased back inside, three more insectoids rapidly gaining on her. Fre and Paulus responded as quickly as possible catching one mere feet from Morul, who continued to run on. The first blow to the insectoid crippled it's leg, a wide sweep that seemed to catch it off guard. It struck back forcing Fre a step back and inflicting another minor injury to her leg. The other two insectoids sprinted past the fighters towards Morul, and found themselves being chased by Paulus. Suddenly the ground opened up beneath them as they sprang the last line of traps and they disappeared from view.

Paulus stopped as they disappeared and began turning back when he heard Fre call out:

"Heads up!"

He turned, just in time to see a large bug flying towards him. They collided, going down in a tangle of limbs but Paulus rapidly thrust the creature off of him, raising his hammer. It didn't move. Fre approached laughing out loud.

"Oooooo, should have seen the look on your face!"

"Hmph. A little more warning next time would have been nice."

Fre merely grinned.

"Well, I'm ginnae check on Der Kartoffel below, get myself a drink and relax a bit. I think it's your shift now. Don't have too much fun."

Paulus merely snorted as she headed below.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 13, 2009, 02:40:50 pm**

21st of Malachite, Fortress log - in the hand of the High Priest

What with the surprise ambush and everything else going on lately I'm afraid we missed our opportunity to trade with the humans. The merchants packed up and left before I could get down there to trade with them, but by all accounts they had little useful anyways. At this point were almost self-sufficient. We trade more to increase our stockpiles against eventualities than out of actual necessity.

The challenge of Tekkud has also had significant impact on this. With the liason incapacitated the dwarves have come to trade with us but there's been no order, no requests. It's been ... a long time, I'm not sure exactly how long. We see that he get's food and water but he outright refuses any other assistance of ours. I wonder if this has something to do with our ongoing disagreement with the nobles of Shellhelms. The merchants have been somewhat sour as always, but without the requests from the liason they mostly bring useless junk.

It is a quandry we find ourselves in. I'd say the humans have been lacking patience as well, but it simply isn't true. The human liason has been idling away his time in Fre's cantina waiting for his turn. If it weren't for protocol I'd meet with him first, but that would be such an insult to our kinsmen that they might never return. I shall have to try a few things, perhaps I can see Tekkud on his way quicker were we to build him a proper house and I were to tend to him for a while. At the very least we could meet while he was concious. Though in his state I doubt very much he'd make the journey back.

Do I consign him to Mondul?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **August 13, 2009, 04:34:32 pm**

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Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 18, 2009, 04:36:40 pm**

((Nope, it's mid-summer. Dwarves come in the fall. Speaking of...))

It was the second day of fall and the warmth outside was somewhat abnormally hot. The air in the mountains seemed almost stagnant and no wind stirred. That only made work outside more unbearable and perhaps it was because of that that Kolok found Paulus at his desk working on inventory reports.

"Hi there."

Paulus looked up, a startled expression on his face, and then broke into a small smile.

"Kolok! Good to see you up and about! It's about time."

"You're telling me."

"Any longer and I'd have to start accusing you of milking the system. Relaxing in bed, getting fed Fre's food while the rest of us do the work."

A slow smile spread across Kolok's face, stopping quickly on the damaged side. "Aye, well. I heard you took a vacation yerself that way. Wouldn't be the first then."

Paulus took the good-natured ribbing in stride.

"I guess you're hear for your work requests..."

"No, not really, just wanted to say hello and let you know I was up." He began making for the door but Paulus' short cough cut him off.

"As I was saying..." He pulled out a thick sheaf of papers from his desk, setting them on the surface next to him.

"You're our best and only carpenter, not to mention woodcutter. Fre's requested another doz... er... two and a half dozen barrels now it seems. She's been making do with the store-room floor."

"I'll get right ..."

Paulus plowed on. "And Pete's been clamoring for more bins. Seems that all the gold ore they've been processing needs to be stacked properly and it looks like he'll need at least another score."

"Oh, su..."

Paulus gave him a level look. "And don't forget to finish clearing that section of land you were working on. We're running low on logs, what with trade being hampered, and the wood-burners haven't been running in at least two seasons.

Well... off with ye. Them logs don't cut themselves."

Kolok snorted and began heading out of the room, unsure if he should feel scolded or indignant. A quiet voice met him as he left.

"And Kolok, ... it's good to have ye back with us."

((And for the first time in nearly three years no one is injured, which means no one is traipsing half-way across the entire freakin' map to fetch water in a bucket only to decide half-way back that they're thirsty, or hungry or tired and that they need to drop the bucket in order to hurry back. Which bucket then get's picked up by someone else, emptied out and put back in the furniture storage. I swear, getting a drink of water in this place is about as quick as ice-sculpting with only your hands. But there are no other sources that aren't frozen in winter.))

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)
Post by: sonerohi on August 18, 2009, 09:27:35 pm

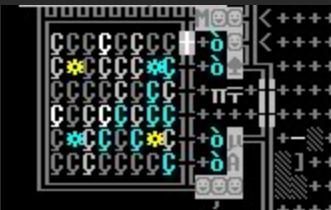
((No cave river yet/at all? Also, I swear on Crush's grave that you had a line about how trade with the humans went poorly, shortly after the line about the humans leaving without trading.))

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on August 19, 2009, 12:48:23 am

((To be honest, I might have. I frequently post and then go back and re-read it for clarity and make corrections then. So you're PROBABLY not going crazy.

But no guarantees.))

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on August 25, 2009, 05:54:21 pm



Paulus, Oddbodd and Thesauarusaurus stood in the small room off of the fourth hall, near the stairs to the trade depot. Shelves covered the entry way filled to the brim with small stone marbles with intricate carvings of various sizes and stones. Four arrays of levers stood just inside the room itself and a table and chair graced the entry way as if posing a line of defense from the outside world. Behind the entrance sat a vast array of mechanisms, gears, gear trees and other machinery. A faint whirring noise could be heard. Several slits in the wall faced the trio and in them could be seen the level of balls inside the machine itself.

Oddbodd stood with obvious satisfaction, grinning widely as the others surveyed the work.

While Paulus quietly surveyed the entire working and examined the diagrams carved into the walls Thesaurusaurus scratched his head.

"How's this thing work again?"

"Simple, it tracks on an internal counter the number of each items of a given material and displays it in these columns that you can see here when you pull the designating levers. Initial configuration is the time consuming part and it's already been set up.

Basically it consists of feeding the designation units into the hopper and the machine sorts them by size, density and weight, sorting them and cataloging each item according to it's code. The code has been engraven on the walls providing designation units if you have any questions. If you need to add inventory you do so using that protocol. Subtraction of goods is even more straight-forward. You simply use the small lever on the front of it and remove the appropriate number of whatever goods were lost, stolen, bartered, eaten or whatnot.

It should automatically calculate the change in weight and alter the display manually based on the new numbers."

The scribe looked both skeptical and somewhat disturbed. "Yes, but how does it run?"

"Oh, the powering device is a clockwork spring made of iron. The wind-up device is over here. It's still a little stiff, but it should loosen up with use. If it's used regularly I estimate that a single wind should last just over three weeks. Had I been able to get ahold of a more permanently flexible material and a larger housing I might be able to get it to last as long as two months. Either that or hook it up to an external power source."

Paulus had opened the door as was examining the internal workings when Oddbodd called out. "I wouldn't go in there while it's running. It can be a little finicky and if you get something caught in the gear trees it could be fatal. I nearly lost a finger calibrating the thing just last week."

Paulus nodded and looked again at the complex system. "Run a change then, I want to see this thing in action. Remove an alder log from the inventory and then re-add it."

Oddbodd nodded, reached behind him and set the levers designating the material. A series of grindings could be heard as he walked to the second lever which showed him a metal plate with the options. He switched the second lever to log and a frantic whirring and clicking could be heard as the small beads suddenly fell from the slits, a click could be heard and they refilled themselves. The count wasn't very high. Thesaurusaurus watched intently.

"Looks like we only have four of those in inventory at the moment." He flipped a toggle lever on the front and pulled a single bead from the chute, before sealing it again. The lever was flipped back and a frantic whirring could be heard again. The level remained the same as he had left it. He walked over to a brass funnel near the door and flipped another lever. "Adding it back now."

He dropped the bead, an orthoclase marble the size of the tip of his thumb, into the funnel and it disappeared into the tube, rattling it's way into the machine. More rumblings could be heard within and a few seconds later the small stone dropped back into the slitted chute adding itself back to the tally.

Paulus closed the door. "Impressive Oddbodd. You've quite the gift for this."

Oddbodd's grin split his face while next to him the scribe still shook his head.

"But what's the point of it all? We can just keep all this information in the ledger."

Oddbodd looked somewhat deflated until Paulus spoke.

"Aye, we can. That is certainly true. But how many dwarves can properly read and write, and of those that can how many can write legibly? As the fortress grows the work on inventory will grow as well. I've seen it happen more than once and soon you'd be doing nothing but zipping here and there and checking on stock levels and figuring out where things are, or aren't and you'd have no time. Plus, any scribes that come after would have to learn your system, your handwriting to make out what things are at, or start again from scratch.

This would eliminate that, in addition to removing the need for using so much vellum in the inventory process. It's all 'paperless' as it were. It makes the system standardized and the same regardless of who is keeping inventory. And anybody should be able to run it, even if they can't read or write."

Thesaurusaurus realized then that he was defeated. His objections would be overruled but he couldn't help but wonder if that monstrosity that Oddbodd had created would all of a sudden make his position somewhat obsolete. The thought burdened him as he left to think, and grab a mug of brew. The two engineers remained in the room discussing the complex system that was, to be honest, way over his head. He had a talent for writing, and even numbers, but such systems, he couldn't help but think, were an abberation. He couldn't help but recall a warning from his youth. His uncle, old Uncle Butler, who was older than most of his family could remember, frequently told stories to the younger dwarves when they got together. The warning flared in his mind anew at seeing the thing that had been created.

"Never tempt fate, kiddos. Never create a machine in imitation of a dwarven mind, for you risk destruction in doing so."

He never really said why, but his mentality stuck with Thesaurusaurus well enough. This Butlerian warning filled his thoughts and he couldn't help but wonder if their doom was, even now, being made.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 27, 2009, 01:31:08 pm**

14th of Limestone, early Autumn, 10

One of the masons spotted the wagons coming from the north in the early morning sunhsine from her place atop the temple.

"Merchants! To the north!"

A few others soon had made their way up to see the seven wagons and nearly half a dozen pack animals making their way along the ridge of the perilous mountain range. One headed down below and began spreading the word as the others, after watching for a while, went back to their work. The dwarven merchants were slow in arriving but they had little difficulty this time around and soon they were pulling into the entryway and bringing their wagons down the ramp towards the trade depot.

Surprisingly, Boink was already there to greet them. A large pile of goods, clothing and rough hewn stone was stacked in the depot, as well as several tools and some other weapons. The merchants already looked pleased as Boink eagerly greeted them, shaking the leader's hand. The head merchant seemed surprised for a moment, then hesitant, as if he didn't know what was going on. He spat on the ground as he descended and muttered under his breath.

"Bloody cultists." He turned to one of the guards next to him and whispered something to him and soon the guards had taken up alert positions around the depot.

Boink frowned at his actions and insisted.

"I'm not a cultist. I'm a loyal worshipper of Urdim Silveryhelped, the Bejeweled Tax, god of wealth and fortre..."

The head merchant cut her off. "I bloody well know him, lass. Half my crew worships him as well. Huh, I thought everyone here was a Death follower."

"Nope. Only a little over half are. The rest of us follow the clan."

"Oh, I see." His smile extended but did not quite reach his eyes. "Let's trade then."

The deal had been sealed. He'd managed to purchase almost everything they'd brought out, excluding the bins themselves. A vast assortment of clothing, mostly elvish or human from the looks of it. Several weapons of decent quality that would fetch a fine price in the current market for such things, and even some armor, though not suitable for a dwarf. There had been a decent amount of trade goods, some wood baubles, stone toys, jewelry and instruments, all of very good quality but very much unadorned. It was a good haul and he'd made a killing on the deal. They'd taken all the ore, the flux, all the uncut gems and some of the stone blocks and picked over the steel

armor but he'd managed to get a good portion of that back in the bartering. Ironically on of the shields they purchased had been an engraving of this very visit, made specifically for this trip. The design had been included on several other items as well but they would be spread out at their other stops.

He smiled. It was one way they had of letting the king know, subtly, that they were completing their end of the bargain, despite the push from the nobles at Shellhelms. For now the King still paid them more to make the trip, but at their price he did not think it would last too much longer. And then they would also get paid not to come. It was a win-win for them.

One of the others cultists showed up a short time later and sent them with a 'present' for the king. A single Goblin skull totem, expertly carved, and as much rough hewn mica as their wagons could carry. He didn't like it, he would have preferred to travel on with empty wagons, but it was their sworn duty to deliver such gifts to the king. Even the ten percent cut they got of such things would be pointless when the gift itself was stone.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **sneakey pete** on **August 28, 2009, 07:42:39 am**

((ohh, a dwarven counting machine, nice. But does it actually do anything? :P))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **September 01, 2009, 07:46:51 pm**

You know, I just realized, due to Sean's RTD's anniversary, that this epic tale has been around for exactly one year and 2 months. Great work Paulus, you're writing never gets old.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Draconius** on **September 02, 2009, 04:54:49 pm**

Hey, finally caught up after forgetting about this for almost two months (I'm terrible). And of course my guy (or gal, as it seems to alternate with ever post) gets some action right after the last time I checked this thread... Hah. Anyway, great writing as always.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 08, 2009, 05:07:46 pm**

((I haven't forgotten this, I've just been taking a creative break from it for a bit. So, here's another installment.))

18th of Timber, Late autumn

Khain was just on his way back inside with another log when she heard an animal whinny off to her right. She'd been out getting a break from the heat of the forges and figured that the wood would likely be put to use making bins for the bars anyways, so she might as well help bring them in. She looked off towards the south, the darkening sky portending a coming storm. But what she saw closer at hand made her drop the log. She let it roll back partway down the hill until it came to a stop at a boulder as she scrambled up the slope the other direction.

"Ambush!"



She managed to easily make the entrance of their fortress and through the hall without being chased and began sounding the warning. By the time she arrived at the bottom steps of the stairs Fre had made it to them as well, followed closely by the Hound.

Fre steadied her and let her catch her breath for a second.

"What is it lass, and how many?"

"A... Avar. At ... least a ... dozen. Just ... south.... of the entrance. Halfway up ... the slope."

Fre turned to Paulus and they nodded to each other, before Fre turned back to Khain, dragging her with them.

"The others are all in the Bold Anvil, drinking. Either that or asleep and off duty. You're with us. Let's suit up."

Fre was still in most of her gear but she gave a hand to Khain, ensuring that she suit up properly as the Hound rapidly donned his worn gear, grabbing a heavy steel hammer from the bin. Khain chose one of the obsidian short-swords and soon the trio were pounding back up the stairs. Two with warhammers, one with sword.

They passed the traps and warily stood near the exit. Faint sounds of the jingle of metal could be heard from below still and Fre risked sticking her head out briefly to assess the situation.

"Full squad. Looked like maceavar led by some sort of guard with a sword. Just milling about near the excavations on the south side."

Paulus nodded curtly. "You thinkin' what I'm thinkin'?"

Fre smiled slightly and nodded. "Tactical strike? Rush in, get the leader and retreat if we have to after that? Sounds good ta me."

Khain paled slightly but did not complain. She'd never been in battle, but it was the dwarven way of life. You fought for what you had, or you died and it was taken. Her labors had hardened her, she wore good armor and she was with two veterans. And there was no one else available at the time.

"There!" Fre pointed below, moving slightly to allow the others to see. "We'll make for the outcropping and make our stand there at it. Decent defensive potential, close to their leader at the moment. Make for that. If you get separated try to make your way back to it. We'll

make our stand there."

Fre and Paulus slipped their weapons out of their sheaths then and crouched down, beginning to move. Khain was a second behind them, not realizing at first that they were already going. Soon the three were making their way across the slope horizontally before descending upon the avar in a screaming rush.

Paulus was fastest and led the charge down the slope. One of the avar appeared from behind a boulder near him, startled at his approach and he shifted directions slightly, bringing his hammer across his path in a wide horizontal arc. It caught the avar in the chest and across one arm, smashing into her and lifting her out of her saddled unicorn, sending her flying. The Hound followed her trajectory down for a few paces before ascertaining that she was not getting back up before turning on the unicorn behind him now.

Fre and Khain continued the rush uninterrupted. They arrived at the rock outcropping in time for the avar guard to raise a fist and signal an attack before they clashed into each other. The avar managed to block Fre's first blow on his shield, but the second was too low for him to intercept and it caught the unicorn in the side, caving in the chest cavity and knocking the beast swiftly down the slope, unseating the avar in the process. The guard flapped his wings as his mount disappeared underneath him and settled to the ground, lashing out at the now exposed dwarf, catching her in the weapon arm from one side. The blade sunk deep, cutting through steel and chain into the flesh beneath and Fre felt her weapon slip from her hand that would no longer respond. Avar began crowding in then as the leader began raining blows upon her but she managed to back her way up against the boulder outcropping as Khain fought beside her doing her best to drive the group away.

Paulus appeared from uphill again then, jumping down and assaulting the leader with a savage ferocity, drinking him back from his friends and the battle soon descended into chaos. Fre could only remember blocking blow after blow, protecting Khain's back as they stood pressed up against each other while Paulus' battle raged on below in the valley. She saw him slay the leader, crushing his lower torso into the soft sandy loam of the swamp below and then a blow hit her from the side and behind, driving into her shield arm, numbing it. The weight of the steel shield dragged her arm to the ground as it hung limp and she faced her attacker with grim determination. She dodged another blow, and another, allowing it to deflect off of her steel chainmail. A ringing blow to the head downed her, stunned and only through a dim blur did she see Khain above her cut down her attacker even as the avar sought to finish off his opponent.

And then Paulus appeared again, scattering the remaining avar and he and Khain sent them into a rout. Paulus chased a pair off to the south-west as Khain headed north after another. The impetus of the assault had been broken, their leader slain and though more than a half dozen remained they splintered. Fre lay on the ground unmoving as she assessed the world around her. Her arms would not respond and she could feel the warm blood flowing down one side of her armor. She wore nothing underneath to soak it up. But all around her was quiet. She could hear continued fighting and soon the sounds of more dwarven voices joined the rest. She heard the creaking of leather and timber and the bray of animals as the caravan passed nearby, some of their guards helping to chase down the now fleeing avar.

And then she blacked out.

She awoke again some time later, her arms aflame with pain. It was nearing dusk now and several voices were heard nearby. Led came then and stood over her briefly assessing the damage.

"Can you move?"

She grunted and swore at him. "Help me up and I'll kick your skinny little elven ..."

He raised his hands, smiling slightly, before reaching down and helping her to her feet. She felt a little faint and nearly collapsed again but with his support they managed to get down to the infirmary. As they went he plied her with questions.

"Did you see where Paulus and Khain got off to? They've not been seen since the alarm was sounded. We figured they were with you."

"Don't know. Hnngh. Gentle on that arm there. After they broke they chased after them. Didn't see exactly where they got off to. May have headed down into the valley."

"I'll let the search know to check along the valley floor. Draconius and Glacies are out there hunting those that fled as well. You rest, we'll find them."

He helped her into bed and saw that she was reasonably comfortable before leaving again to organize the clean-up.

It was three days later that Paulus finally returned, having spent the time hunting the avar that fled to the west.

A week later Draconius had been brought in, injured. She'd found an avar and unicorn and gotten her weapon stuck in the rider but the beast had nearly killed her before she managed to roll under a rotten log and refused to come out. Glacies had found her almost a day later when she'd tracked down the same avar and unicorn and slew them. No word was had about Khain and the search widened.

It was nearly two more weeks before Led himself had finally managed to find Khain tucked between two boulders somewhere out on the northern slopes. She'd chased after an avar and been severely wounded. A leg was crushed beneath the avar mace even as she'd managed to nearly gut the avar and the unicorn bore it away north-east. Khain had lain there for several days and as delerium began to set in crawled between the boulders to be more sheltered. Led had found her only by luck and even as she was bringing her inside Khain died of exposure. (Read dehydration)

They carefully dressed the body and prepared a new coffin for her, designating a tomb for her in the Crack. Boink had volunteered to take care of fashioning it into a proper tomb and she was buried according to the traditions of the clan. A feast was held in celebration of her memory and though Fre sorely wished she could pay her respects to the dwarf that had saved her own life in the battle her injuries prevented her from doing so. More than once she kicked the wall in frustration that she'd thought to bring out an untrained civilian to the fight.

A week later, all was seemingly quiet again if somewhat subdued. They were then only nineteen again. With two in the infirmary.

((Yeah... sorry about the gender benders Draconius. I've got this terrible habit of thinking of most of your characters in the male context even though most of them are female. So unless I remember to go through and switch them to female I tend to be a little vascillating in regards to gender. Technically I think only Led, Paulus, Kolok, Thesaurusaurus and his son, and Der Kartoffel are male. Everyone else is female actually. But I forget that a lot.

And no, Sneaky pete. It doesn't actually do something in game. Just looks like a lot of gears and cogs in the picture. It's my mechanism storage room now. But it's a precursor to the rebirth of Oddbodd's home city, which is one of the main plot lines I've intended for this fortress.))

((P.S. Kill count:
Khain- 1 Avar
Fre- 1 Unicorn
Glacies- 6 Avar, 6 Unicorns - Gained Title Glacies Alathvabok Tangathmat, or Glacies Boltorb the Trampled Bend
Paulus- 8 Avar, 8 Unicorns

Draconius- Honorable mention for trying and not dying in the process.))

Fre muttered to herself in her sickbed, "Damn that stupid cult with their stupid rules. If I had a crossbow in my hand, there would have been nothing left save a stack of arrows in meat." After a few more oaths and curses, she sighed. No use complaining about it now; she wouldn't be using a crossbow or hammer for some time. At least she was alive, unlike poor Khain. Fre never forgot when she failed a

member of the clan. Another sigh. Best to just try to get some sleep. There'd be plenty of time to muse on that once her arms stopped burning like fire.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 23, 2009, 12:29:37 pm**

27th of Timber

The winter winds had already begun blowing from the north-west, bringing with it flurries of snow and the first of the cold weather. The temperatures outside had dropped dramatically, and though it had never really been hot, the once thawed ponds and frigid river now stood unmoving, a thick layer of ice covering them. The temperature inside had changed as well, though most of the areas were still comfortable, thanks, in no small part to the kitchen and forge-hall. As one got closer to the stairwell up it got colder and the crack, well, it had never been properly warm anyways.

Boink grimly strode into Paulus' room, finding the dwarf at his desk, comparing two thick ledgers. She cleared her throat as she entered but he didn't turn, instead he merely spoke.

"Just a second Boink, let me finish this column."

Silence reigned for a moment before Boink queried. "How'd you know it was me?"

He remained bent over the books for a few seconds more before straightening and stretching, cracking his knuckles and his neck.

"Well, you jingle when you walk, your engraving tools in your hip-pouch do that and as we only have two actual engravers here and the other one knocks before she comes in I figured it had to be you. Besides, you have a particular way of clearing your throat."

"Oh."

The Hound smiled a little. "It's not a bad thing, it just your mannerism."

"Oh... well, I've finished the smoothing and work on Khain's tomb."

He nodded, looking instinctively in the direction of the crack, despite the stone in the way.

"Good. It's time we saw to our dead with a little more dignity. If you don't mind running a few work orders to the forges for me... Have Oddbodd begin work on a golden statue for Khain's tomb. Considering the work she did in smelting it all it's only appropriate. I'll ask Led to make some appropriate additions as well. Oh, and tell the others in the forges that if they're done with the gold they can begin melting down all the useless iron equipment we've picked up from the avar and goblins. That'll keep them busy until the miners can be spared to excavate another vein for them to work."

Boink nodded briefly before heading out the room. She'd not been as cheerful lately, but that was to be expected. Work in the Crack always sapped her enthusiasm but she knew that heading down to the forge would cheer her up. She always loved to stop by the metal storage area and look at the rows upon rows of bright, lustrous golden bars, laying neatly stacked in bins. There was something in that sight that made her feel peculiar, almost devout.

Perhaps things would settle down for the winter. She could only hope. Of course, with the miners beginning work now on excavating the lower levels of the temple from the hillside she knew it would mean no small amount of work for her to do as well, outside, in the cold. She shuddered.

At least she could always return to the forge-hall to warm up.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 09, 2009, 06:39:56 pm**

12th of Opal

Thesaurusaurus moved along the hall as fast as he could carrying the sheaf of papers in his arms. It was bad news. Led had to hear of it immeadiately and it was to his office that the clerk was headed. He knew the High priest would be there, he'd spoken with him not minutes ago, before the chaos had descended again.

The avar. The damnable avar had another patrol on their slopes. As if one hadn't been enough. It was even worse news than that though. The entire patrol of fifteen or so carried crossbows, excepting their leader, a guard. And they were in direct path to their only supply of water. Two of their own were wounded still, Fre and Draconius, and would be in need of that water to drink and wash their wounds with.

Led took it well enough. But what made things worse was that everyone else was unavailable. The avar were already advancing towards the fortress and dwarves trying to get water or, worse, the buckets dropped by previous attempts kept getting shot at. Ragnar, Sarah and Glacies were asleep. Fre and Draconius were wounded. Kolok was drinking, Paulus on break.

Led sighed. "Come then Thesaurus, we'll have to hurry and I'll need your help to be quick."

The bundle of papers was dropped in the empty chair and the pair headed towards the Crack.

"Sir, what've you got in mind?"

He didn't speak for a while as they made their way through to the armor and weapons bins and picked out one of the fine steel spears they'd traded for.

"Help me suit up."

"Sir! Surely you don't intend to go out there alone?"

"I do, and I will. There is no one else at the moment, as you've already discovered. I've made my peace with Mondul and accept her judgement."

"What will we do without you?"

"Oh, I imagine one of you will carry on for me should I die. Perhaps you even, or Glacies."

The thought of taking over did not sit well on him as he helped Led into the steel plate with shaking hands. Led spoke again to him, softly.

"Or you could come with me and fight. May Mondul watch over us both."

The scribe looked down as he continued to tighten the harness and leather cords binding the armor in it's proper place.

"I ... I'm no fighter sir. You know that. I... no. Sorry."

Led sighed somewhat. "Don't worry, my friend, I'm not really surprised, and only a little disappointed." He slapped the helmet into position.

"I've left instructions for the church in an envelope in my chest. To be opened only in case of my death. Remember, I'm not gone yet."

Led looked at the floor as he finished with the straps. "Yes sir. Take care."

As Led left to head up the stairs his friend sunk to his knees. He hadn't prayed to Mondul quite as often as he probably should have, but at this time of need he felt he needed her help keenly, if only for his friend. Surely she would watch over him.

((As ooc information, I've had a lot going on lately and haven't updated this as often as I've wanted to. It doesn't help that on my home computer my FPS takes a hit whenever merchants or avar show up, which they've done far too recently. The avar and unicorns were routed and Led's charge was surprisingly not fatal.

He charged down the hill at the group, killing two avar and a unicorn before getting his spear stuck in the second unicorn. The unicorn was wounded and fled with Led following, so his charge quickly led him into and then through the whole group. A martial trance helped I think. He was hit repeatedly, but only minor wounds, with one arrow getting lodged in his lower arm but not causing much damage. He's already recovered.

The others, Glacies, Ragnar and Paulus mostly, took care of the rest with surprisingly few incidences. Kolok did his level best, but the unicorns move exactly as fast as he does and he simply couldn't catch up to any of them. Information on titles acquired will be given in the next post, hopefully next week.

Clean-up's going to take forever. I recover the corpses and body parts, but largely leave the gear lying outside where it fell. I simply don't have enough dwarves to recover it all on such a large map. As it is, it'll take me three months to get things cleaned up, and it's cult policy to recover all bones and skulls. Can't exactly have Geshud Osod without them. ;))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 15, 2009, 06:42:42 pm**

Fortress log, year 10, in the hand of the Head Clerc (sic)

(As a note, variations of Clerk and Cleric were common in the early years of the fortress before until the time of the third Head Clerk, Litast. After that time they were referred to as Clerics, to be differentiated from the Priest in their job description by preachings and ritual activities which could only be performed by Priests. Strangely, Clerics could perform the last rites when the Priests were absent.)

27th of Obsidian

I have completed the information requests that Led asked I look into. As of this year the Hound has slain eleven avar and unicorns, tied with Glacies, who slew the same number. Ragnar and the High Priest himself slew two and two each.

In light of recent bloodletting the Dying of the year ritual will again not be necessary and we plan on celebrating in Clan fashion, honoring those deceased during the year.

Designation of the lower temple works have been completed and the miners have begun their labors on it. The upper works are suspended until the dead have been brought inside.

The human merchant liason has departed. Morul claims to have seem him rather angry and we are concerned about this development. The dwarven liason continues to wallow in self-pity at the foot of the mountain and refuses assistance. He shows no sign of improvement. I will speak with ##### (name has been smudged) about this.

Outbuildings are to be decommissioned as soon as vacant. Draconius' condition is perilous due to his distant nature but as of now he has come to no harm.

Kolok pointed out to me that we now have a pair of Grizzly bears, male and female. They have been removed from cages and taken to the animal husbandry area. The dogs were not happy and have been barking all day. The puppies are more complacent about the matter apparently.

Forge-work continues and our clanmates have been given permission to begin melting down siezed weapons for our own use.

Food and drink supplies are stable, thanks largely to Der Kartoffel who has assumed responsibility for the entire food industry in Fre's absence.

Apparently the tomb of Khain is in preparation. I go to inspect it now. Perhaps tomorrow I shall include a drawing of it and some rubbings from the walls. I hear Boink and Fikod are doing wonders with stone.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 16, 2009, 04:33:10 pm**

25th of Slate, Mid-spring

Paulus smiled to himself as he carried the large plate of food out of the pub and down the central hall into the barracks/infirmary. The smell of roast swan basted in dwarven rum filled the room almost as soon as he entered and Fre's eyes lit up when she saw it. She quickly sat up in bed and, careful not to hurt herself further, smoothed the fine spider-silk blanket down over her legs.

"It's about time someone bring me food. I'm starving. I'm practically wasting away here."

Paulus held the plate away from her for a second or two, deliberately, looking her over with amusement.

"You don't look too emaciated to me."

"Just give me the food!"

Smiling Paulus carefully set the plate on her legs and she pulled off one of the crispy golden wings, sampling it.

"Not bad. Kartoffel's work I take it?"

"Aye, seems to be getting better at it to boot."

"True, it's not bad. A bit too sweet. Should have mixed in a half mug of ale to mute that and give it depth. Just a pinch more salt and maybe some finely minced quarry bush leaves would have made this incredible."

"Well, he's certainly not you in the kitchen, but he's done well. Handles all the work himself. Some of us help a bit to do the organizing, and such, but he's really coming into his own. Silent as the grave though. Almost never speaks."

The pair of friends sat there chatting idly while Fre finished her meal, licking the sweet glaze off her fingers when she was done and giving a hearty belch afterwards.

"I could really do with a good mug of beer you know..."

"No can do. You know the infirmary rules as well as I do. Or maybe not quite as well as I do. I've still spent more time in here than you by far."

Paulus made for the plate and picked it up but Fre grabbed his arm by the wrist. She went suddenly serious.

"Wait. Have a seat."

"Is everything ok?"

She looked around carefully to make sure no one was watching before leaning in. Paulus did the same.

"You remember Onol Lened. I've been having dreams. Nightmares really."

How could he have forgotten. The images of that small gore soaked room beneath the mountain, the coppery smell of blood filling the air. The look of rage in the elven eyes. The madness and insanity that lay beyond. No, he could feel those memories almost as if they were tangible things. Ghosts from the past haunting him.

He closed his eyes and nodded slowly, swallowing.

"I heard their voices yesterday. They must not be allowed to leave! They must be killed!"

A note of madness had entered her voice then, but she calmed herself. It was then that the awful realization struck him. It was mid-spring already. He stood and quickly said: "Wait. I'll be right back." And then he was gone, out the door. It took him maybe ten minutes before he returned, annoyed and slightly angry.

"It's as you said. The elves have come and gone. We were all so busy with the clean-up and aftermath of the battles that no one paid them any heed. They came, sat in the depot and then left, taking with them any information they gained while here."

Fre sat back in bed, exhausted, looking Paulus in the eyes. He saw pain there. Betrayal at those she once thought trust-worthy. But deeper he saw something else and knew what it was. It was fear. And perhaps the first faint signs of madness.

Paulus put his hand gently on her forehead.

"Get some rest. You'll be up again in no time."

He had enjoyed the exchange with Fre, bringing her food and company had brought him joy as well. But it had given him more to think about. Should he tell her all he knew? The more he looked in himself the more he could see a similar madness beginning to take root in himself. Could he root it out? Should he?

It was as if the beginnings of comprehension were dawning in his mind. The extent of their problem in this place, but his mind refused to function properly with the distractions around him. He needed space, and time to think. And he had an idea how that might be accomplished.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **skaltum** on **November 28, 2009, 06:20:06 pm**

urist mcreader cancels read: brain melted by epicness

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 15, 2009, 07:48:27 pm**

6th of Hematite, Early Summer

Led had been busy helping move furniture into his workshop area near the Crack when the cry had gone up and he'd heard the news down the stairwell.

"There's been a cave-in!"

There had been a note of panic in the voice that had brought him up the stairwell as quick as he could manage and he heard several more coming to see as well. The miners had been working long hours clearing out the lower floors of the temple area and he had thought they intended to use the upper layers to break off the lower ones in a massive cascade, but surely they hadn't gotten that far already.

By the time he cleared the entrance and looked out down the hill and over the valley the dust was already beginning to settle and a small crowd was beginning to gather near the base. He made his way down the north side of the slope, carefully using the well worn path that so many trod on a regular basis. It was with peculiar detachment that he noted the crowd gathered well away from the hillside where any sort of mining should have been happening. As he got closer he noted that the Liason's house no longer stood where it had previously been. Of course Tekkud had never considered it his and, for that matter, refused all offers of assistance, stubbornly and adamantly. For three years now, or was it more?, he'd languished outside in all weather, bemoaning the loss of his leg, and crawling a few feet before passing out unconcious. They'd never been able to hold a meeting for long enough to get anything done and out of sheer annoyance Led had taken to simply ignoring his presence.

The furious departure of the Human liason who had been waiting at the same time hadn't added to his perception of the liason but despite that a sinking feeling in the pit of his stomach told him that what had just happened wasn't good. Several voices spoke at once as he approached.

"Miners were taking off the edge of the slope..."

"We were dismantling the house to rebuild..."

"New wall collapsed on him..."

He shook his head as he took in the scene. The newly constructed wall lay in pieces, some having been moved out of the way of the body. Tekkud had been crushed underneath and his broken body lay, surprisingly clean pressed into the soft soil of the swamp.

"Everyone get back to work, I'll see to the preparations for his funeral."

The Hound voice called from the back. "You heard him. There's work to be done. Move along, nothing to see here."

The crowd slowly dispersed and the pair stood above the fallen body as Paulus carefully examined the scene. They stood in silence for several minutes.

"What do you make of it Led?"

"It's unfortunate, though, to be honest, he hasn't been doing all that well lately anyways. Mondul calls to those whose time it is. What do you make of it?"

"I'll need to look into it a bit more. I'm not convinced this is an accident though. See? The braces are all piled off to one side. The foundation of the wall has been tampered with as well, see here? These scuff marks and impressions? I'm guessing someone slipped a shim or wedge under here to help things along."

"Let us hope you're not right. If his death is blamed on us the King might be justified in moving against us. Or forced into it."

"I'm inclined to thing along the same lines. Still, let's put out the word that it was just an accident. I'll look into it. See to the construction of a proper tomb for him. Make it befitting his station as a representative of the King and country."

"Of course... I've got the perfect place in mind. I suspect that poor Tekkud here has been used by more than one person. Perhaps they intended him to die here."

"Hmm... you're right. There might be that side of it as well. The nobles of Shellhelms would love nothing better to point and claim we'd killed a liason."

"Aye, well, I'd better get to work."

"Fine... I'd like to stay here a bit more and look at some other things. Perhaps I can find some hints. I'm surprised I haven't noticed anything odd before. We're mining only a hundred feet away or so."

"Aye, strange. Let me know what you find... either way."

The Hound nodded as the Hunter walked away, and then turned back to the scene before him, stooping to the ground as if sniffing for scents.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 16, 2009, 04:10:46 pm**

4th of Limestone- Early Autumn

Boink politely knocked on the door to Paulus' office and waited.

"C'mon in, Boink."

She opened the door hesitantly before walking in. How had he known?

"I expect you're wondering how I knew it was you? Heh, deductive reasoning. I know who's on shift above, and the work orders that are out. You, Fikod, and Pete are the only three without active work requests right now and Fikods above, getting ready to smooth the quarry floor before we dump a thousand tons on stone into it the quick way. Pete I saw in the Bold Anvil not a half hour ago, and I expect she hasn't moved much."

"Hmph. Well, I don't suppose you know why I'm here then?"

"No, that I'll let you tell me."

She smiled slightly, stepping closer and resting against the edge of his desk before looking him in the eyes.

"I want a favor from you."

Paulus cocked his head and raised one eyebrow. "Well, now. What sort of favor are you wanting?"

"I've spoken with several of the others. Other loyalists, that is."

"Loyalists? First time I've heard that term." A frown flitted across his face briefly. "You'd better clarify that first."

She snorted softly. "Not surprised you haven't heard it yet. Most of us aren't entirely sure which camp you're in. Loyalists, as in loyal to the clan, as in not placing the gods or goddesses before blood. Anyways, Ragnar assured me you'd help, that you were about as loyal as it came to the clan. I suppose she should know." He frowned again, but she continued on. "We were thinking it might be nice to have a place to call our own here in this fortress."

"Oh. And what exactly was the favor?"

"Well, we've got some plans..."

"We?"

"Fine, I've got some plans that I'd like to act upon some time in the future and I'd like your co-operation." There was just a hint of a pause before she continued. "As well as the resources we'll need when the time comes."

He paused for a bit as he thought, then nodded seriously.

"Done, but, in exchange I want your dedicated help for some things I'm hoping to get done."

"Like?"

"I want the Crack cleared of rubble. I've had a small hall dug out in the Crack just across it on the top level that needs the rubble dumped out of it, and the lower trails I'd like cleared while I'm helping dig at the temple out front."

She didn't like the Crack. There was something ... unhealthy about it. But she knew she couldn't back down now.

"I'd also like all work we do there kept quiet about. No discussion, to anyone for any reason. is that clear?"

"I suppose ..." she began.

But the Hound cut her off again.

"Good. I have my reasons for it as I'm sure you do for your ... ideas. I've had surplus food and drink moved into one of the room up top, as well as a bed, table and chair installed for use. I can give you a copy of the key needed to access the crack now, but when you're not working I'd like the key back."

It was her turn to puzzle at his intentions but he didn't give her long to think about it.

"I'm due for a shift out front now, but I expect the rubble to be cleared before the weeks out. There's a lot there, so you'll need to get to work."

She nodded and headed out. Ragnar had been correct, but she still had her doubts. How could someone in as high a position in the cult as he enjoyed still be a clan loyalist? For that matter, few, if any here knew his full name even. He answered to almost anything and seemed to care little for such things. But both Ragnar and Fre seemed to be convinced. Even Pete, ever the skeptic, had grudgingly concurred with them. Pete had little to do, perhaps she could help as well. It seemed prudent to have someone else working as well in the accursed Crack. One couldn't be too careful in that place.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 17, 2009, 03:55:07 pm**

11th of Limestone

Draconius helped herself to a mug of the smooth amber dwarven ale that had been lagered below in the cellar now for several years. It was finally acquiring a decent taste, that aged nutty smoothness that she'd come to expect of her drinks. The quality was still something to be desired but Fre and Der Kartoffel had been doing well enough. Perhaps in time Der Kartoffel would become a master brewer. Not that they needed more drink. Nearly a hundred barrels of various types of booze had been set to age in the second hall. Some tucked in a dry corner here, others there. Fre had taken some of the dwarven wine and begun ordering it mixed properly to produce a nice sherry from it. But that would still take years before it got truly good. Perhaps even decades.

She sat down at one of the smaller tables next to the Hound and they began casually conversing. Much had happened but little had changed since she'd been injured in an Avar ambush. The newest talk about the Bold Anvil concerned another Avar patrol that had been spotted on the slopes east of them. The masons had seen them from the top of the temple while they'd been working. That'd raised the alarm at first, but when they patrol had settled in to the east and hadn't begun wandering closer they were eventually ignored, to a certain extent. Talk of the missing human caravan took prominence again and subdued interest in the expected coming of the fall caravan had risen to the fore. Not to mention very quiet whispers about Ragnar behind her back. She'd been bitten on the rump by a cave spider and it'd swelled to significant proportions. All of them already had pathetically threadbare clothing and that certainly hadn't helped her situation.

Fortunately for her there were few males to truly impress and more than a few had already had their clothing fall apart altogether. Fre herself wore only her armor. The Hound had only his original socks and shoes to his name, and had taken to wearing some human scraps to cover himself and a generous coating of blood and muck donated, rather unwillingly, from living and dead alike. They were dwarves. Modesty and immodesty had rather different meanings from most human civilizations. The lack of clothing wasn't altogether uncommon but even Draconius couldn't help but blush a little thinking of some of the menfolk spying on her during her yearly bath in the icy stream.

A shout rang through the hall, faintly at first, then picked up by myriad other voices. Traders have come! They've been ambushed by Avar out on the slopes!

Draconius merely sat and drank her ale. It was only her second draught since officially being back on the work roster. The Hound too hardly stirred, it seemed he was on a much needed break and though he turned his head to listen with interest made no move to go help. After some time amused reports began filtering in. Two more avar patrols, nearly a full fifty avar, all mounted on unicorns hadn't been able to overcome the surprise of being set upon by a dozen dwarves from the opposite side as expected. A half dozen avar and unicorns lay dead and in pieces and the caravan now made it's way towards the peak. Several of the avar had been warily following them but most seemed altogether uneager to press their advantage. Thesaurusaurus passed by carrying a small bundle of papers and went to trade and returned looking pleased enough, having donated several of the nicer food beast totems to the crown and sold the rest, as well as some silks off of the fallen for a decent haul of metal, gems and steel gear. Only the pack animals had come from the traders after all, the front entrance was still in a state of construction with all the mining work going on and no wagons would have made the entry in any case.

Draconius wiped her mouth, cleaned out her mug and nodded to the Hound before returning to her masonry duties.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 18, 2009, 02:13:13 pm**

((Out of curiosity... does anyone know if I can cagetrap a Zombie Troll? I'd look through the raws but I'm feeling lazy right now.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 18, 2009, 04:03:38 pm**

19th of Sandstone

The four avar sat astride their unicorns, casually moving in on the top of the hill where the construction was taking place. They knew their danger. These dwarves were clearly foes, and savages to boot. What the building was intended to be they weren't quite sure as the mountain-side of it was simply a smooth roundish shape, almost as if it were a tower.

The four had spied movement up above them where construction continued but it wasn't until one of the unicorns whinnied and shied up did they realize that a pair of nearly naked, dirty as sin dwarves had emerged from the hill-side. One of them held a silvery spade the other a polished steel one. They were covered in dirt from mining the stone and one sported large patches of dried blood and they were running.

Directly for them at astounding speed.

Before they could even spur the unicorns on the pair had struck. The female charging at the the leader of the avar without so much as flinching. The unicorn reared up and tried to strike with it's hooves as the avar's wings spread wide to steady it's seat atop the beast. In a lightning quick strike however the spade tore through one of the legs of the unicorn, dropping the pair rolling onto the ground. The avar rolled free and tried to defend his mount from the savage but after a few quick parries of incoming blows he realized that the naked dwarf outmatched him, in skill, speed and ferocity. He tried to land a blow on her unprotected frame but every time the handle of spade whirred to intercept it or the blade blocked his blow and in a stunning move he suddenly found himself on his back, staring up at the wispy clouds of the sky as the world grew cold and dark around him. He looked to his companions to warn them but saw that they too had already fallen. Only a single unicorn was loose and fleeing, being pursued by a rapidly gaining dwarf of incredible agility. They had failed.

And then all went dark and he knew no more.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **skaltum** on **December 18, 2009, 05:03:13 pm**

Quote from: Paulus Fahlstrom on December 18, 2009, 02:13:13 pm
((Out of curiosity... does anyone know if I can cagetrapp a Zombie Troll? I'd look through the raws but I'm feeling lazy right now.))

with cage traps ::) :P

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Frellock** on **December 18, 2009, 05:12:56 pm**

Yep; I'm 99% sure that the "zombie" addition does not add the [TRAPAVOID] tag, and trolls don't start it.

Also, great couple of updates! Glad to see you back at it.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 22, 2009, 01:48:40 pm**

16th of Opal Midwinter

The two friends held each other's forearms in a strong handshake. One, clad in steel chainmail and with his High steel spade in hand nodded. The other, wear his usual work garb, the leather apron of a crafts dwarf and bonecarver shook his head slightly.

"You take care in there. Who knows what lurkes in the crevasses of that place, locked away from the world for centuries."

"Millenia if my guess is correct, but don't worry. I'll be all right. Just make sure you lock the door behind me. I've got my key stashed in the hall across the Chasm. If something is pounding on the door, by Goden's green earth, don't open it."

"Still, if you can't handle it, I shudder to think that a door will be able to hold it for long."

"That's possible, so let's hope it doesn't come to that. But this needs to be done. I've been putting it off for too long."

"I understand."

"Besides, the way you've been going through bone decorating the furniture for the Bold Anvil we'll soon need more."

Led smiled ruefully. It was true, he'd used up almost their entire supply of 'lesser' bones, turtle, horse, sheep, dog, fish on the decorations and wasn't quite finished. Well over a thousand bones so far. But they'd get more, he did not doubt. And they still have a vast amount of the bones of their enemies to use.

Paulus turned and strode through the door, closing and sealing it behind him. He didn't know how long he would need to clear the stretch all the way to the underground lake as he had hoped, but it was sure to be months at least. As he walked across the sturdy upper bridge and into the largely vacant hall that was to be his quarters for the next while he looked at the smooth bed, the table and chair and then into the larder. He had enough food for possibly a year or more in here. He would be fine in that regard. It was indeed what lurked in the dark that concerned him the most.

But even there, there was also beauty to be seen. The Crack was a natural feature and possessed the beauty of ages of toil by the earth. Massive stalagmites and stalagtites dotted the upper roof and any shelves exposed enough. Untouched veins of metal and gems lay on the edge of the crack, uncovered by the earth and ripe for the plucking. And most of all the Crack itself. A miles long fissure leading deep into the heart of the earth itself as far as they knew. They could go no deeper than fresh air would permit and even at that limit the crack hadn't begun narrowing. He knew he could only deal with the infestation in the higher regions of the Crack. The nether regions were simply beyond him. And perhaps, this was for the best.

He shouldered his spade and tromped down the stairs to the low road that led along the edge of the crack to the south-east. Here is where his work would begin. Here is where he would bring death to the deathless.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 05, 2010, 07:04:31 pm**

24th of Slate Mid-Spring

The Hound had emerged from the Crack only hours before, an eager gleam in his eye and he began almost immeadiately on his hunt to find Oddbodd. Before the mechanic could be found he'd been greeted again by most that he saw, though in his ichor and blood stained steel armor he made quite a sight. Most of the dwarves greeted him from a distance. Nearly three months of hunting the dead had left him with a pungency that even those that worshipped Mondul avoided. It took only a few moments for him to track the other dwarf down, who was tinkering in the forges. A few seconds of explanation was all he needed before Oddbodd gave a wide grin and a brief half-hearted salute before dashing off towards his pile of mechanisms and trapping gear.

Almost all dwarves loved watching gladiatorial matches. And the thought of pitting goblins or even insectoids against some of the stronger undead appealed to him greatly.

When the Hound presented his ideas to Led the High priest was considerably less excited about the prospect.

"I don't know, Paulus. It seems to me too much like us using the dead for our own devices. We should be destroying them, not using them for entertainment."

"Aye, I can understand that. But keep in mind that few here have truly fought undead before. We could even trap some of the lesser dead for training purposes. We're still destroying them, but we're spreading out the experience among our own. Would you elevate Glacies to the rank of Priestess without any experience against the dead? It's a great learning experience for all of us, even just watching. They can't heal and will not get loose. They will be destroyed eventually, do not doubt that."

Led sighed heavily. "Very well, I'll take it under consideration and see what our Mistress thinks. Besides, I've got more important concerns at the moment."

The Hound raised an eyebrow. "Oh, what's that? More trouble from Shellhelms?"

"Yes, and no. At least no, not directly... gah. I'm sorry to have to break the news to you this way but have you seen a new face around here since you're back among us?"

"No, but then, I haven't been around to visit anyone specific either, other than Fre that is."

"Well, we've received an immigrant."

"Just one?"

"Aye, just one. A Morul Rigothkadol by name. Brewer by profession. Nice lass, and a devout believer. I think I remember her from some of my later services. Anyways, she's the second advance group. The first group left with Der Kartoffel as you recall."

"I remember. None survived but him, right."

"Exactly. Well, it seems that there was some concern over that, they were supposed to send word through the humans that all was well for immigrants here. No word ever arrived from here to them though, and so, eventually Morul was sent to double check. They'd not heard word from the humans about this place for some time now, undoubtedly due to the liason complications we've had."

"There are more planning on coming?"

Led nodded grimly. "Aye, and though that's happy news, the reason why isn't. You're aware of the cost that was incurred to move our people across the sea, yes?"

"Of course, at least to some extent."

"Well, it seems like things cost more than could be easily paid at the time so the King incurred a debt in order to cover things."

"Go on..."

"Well, we've been making token payments so far of course, but they're calling in the debts now for some reason. A Council was called at Shellhelms and the King has travelled there for it. Things were voted upon and the only solution that they found was to ... strip Onol Lened for it's riches as payment. They've already begun the stripmining process and all extraneous labor has been turned over to either mining or smelting and smithing."

A silence settled over the pair of them.

The Hound spoke quietly. "Is it too late then?"

"I'm afraid so. The process has already begun, and with the diamond deposits and the adamantine that was found it's our richest dig site on this continent by far. The council voted, narrowly, to sacrifice it's utility to pay our debts."

"Bah, the fools. The mines will leave dozens of forgotten little back ways into the place, especially from the chasm. It will be a place of security no more then."

"I'm afraid not. I believe they intend to seal it or collapse it when they're done."

The Hound ground his teeth before shaking his head. "What's done is done then, I suppose. No use in crying over spilled beer. We should make preparations for more immigrants then?"

"In time. The place will not be gutted in a day. Or even a year or three I suspect, though there will be less and less work as time goes on and ore becomes hard to find. We're to send word with the next Human caravan headed south according to Morul and let them know we're still alive and have room for them."

"And do we?"

Led shrugged. "We have it, or will make it I suppose. Still, you have your work in the Crack to finish, and Glacies on the Temple. I'll let Thesaurusaurus work out the details for this soon enough."

Paulus left Led's office shaking his head and thinking. Perhaps he'd go and help Oddbodd with the traps. The sooner they were done, the sooner he could get back to his work.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Keita** on **January 06, 2010, 06:15:29 am**

This is going well Paulus. Nice plot twist

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 06, 2010, 01:41:31 pm**

1st of Hematite Early summer

The first faint scents of flowers and trees had barely begun blowing down the passageway, marking the shifting of the wind that always came with the dawn. Fre awoke and did her best to stretch in the infirmary bed. As she always did she also gently worked her arm, massaging the sore muscles and trying to stretch and test it. It felt remarkably good, at least compared to previously, and she decided that it was healed enough for her to remove herself from her bed. Someone had left a bucket of water next to the pine bed and she used that to wash and clean herself again, for the first time in ages. The hall was still quiet, a few dwarves were about their work already, but most were still soundly abed. It would still be very early morning and she wanted to take in the sights above.

Padding through the main hall she encountered nobody and it wasn't until she got to the upper chamber that she finally ran into the first other person, Glacies, already up and cutting stone into blocks. Glacies looked surprised at seeing her but merely nodded politely as she past. The sky was pale as the first light filtered from the sun and as she arrived on the peak, climbing onto the temple walls the sun was barely peeking over the mountains to the east.

She stood there for some time, squinting into the horizon and thinking in the early morning solitude. She'd had the nightmares again recently. Red-eyed elves chasing after her through the barren and dry landscape, blood on their hands and running down their mouths. And behind them, a figure, laughing as it came on, hunting her. She shivered, but not because of the dawn chill.

Before the sun was fully up she was retreating below again. The brightness was already almost blinding to her, since she'd spent no time aboveground in the past year. A thought occurred to her then and she changed her course and began making her way to the trade depot. She knew the elves had been locked in almost as soon as they'd arrived. She'd made sure that happened this year. Just thinking of them made her shiver again as she struggled to get a grip on her emotions. But when she arrived there and peered into the darkness through the siege slits in the wall all she could see and hear was the mad braying of a mule. There was no other sound in the darkness and she knew that she was again safe. The elves would not bother her again until next year and she heaved a sigh of relief as she strode wearily to the Bold Anvil.

She needed a good drink.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 11, 2010, 06:23:06 pm**

15th of Hematite Early Summer Year 12

The work on the temple continued, albeit slowly. Most of the lower work had been finished, the walls carved out, the sides smoothed. The real remaining lower work was that of the miners yet again, now that things had been prepared. Each layer of floor had been marked along the walls for removal, both along the inner walls of the temple itself as well as the connections to the outer walls. Some few sections would remain for stability, and would, with time, be removed carefully as well. It was along the uppermost channel lines that erith had her work interrupted in a most distressing manner. One moment she was calmly carving out a section of floor, the next a sizeable body of mounted avar were cresting the hill only a short ways to the south and heading her way. She did what all dwarves were trained to do.

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaambush!" she shouted as she left her work and headed for the entrance to the underground complex. The avar had shown reluctance in the past to enter there, perhaps for good reason. Their wings would be of little use in the comparatively cramped underground, and though there was room enough for them to ride down, it would be inconvenient enough.

Ragnar was the first to respond, true to her fashion she was clad only in that vestment that birth had granted to her, liberally covered in dust and dirt from mining, so that it was hard to distinguish the dwarf underneath. In her hand she held the unmistakeable gleam of her anurite spade. A tool that was quickly becoming known both near and far. Unafraid she charged the foremost of the avar, scything the legs of the unicorn out from underneath him as she bowled into him. In all there were fifteen maceavar and one hammer-wielding guard. Though they should have easily been the match of any dwarf something seemed to hold them back, though whether it was instict or a divine hand would be hard to determine. Like a boulder shot from a catapult she flew, tearing through their ranks and chasing a particularly stubborn avar down the hill-side and away from the rest. Two avar had been felled by her and, in addition to their mounts but this third proved both elusive and doggedly quick. Down the hillside they raced and into the beginnings of the swamp at the bottom. The spring lay just to their east when she finally got a hefty blow on the avar, dislodging him from his mount as the unicorn fled the scene. He rose quickly from the ground, but not quickly enough as the spade descended, and in another moment, he moved no more.

It was only a short while later that Ragnar passed both Fre and Paulus as they emerged from the entrance of the dwelling into the full

light of the summer sun. A brief wave of nausea passed over Fre's face as Ragnar greeted them.

"I left some for ye, away to the south. I needed a drink after that bit 'o runnin'."

Fre nodded and turned to Paulus who raised his spade in salute. Hammer rang on blade as the pair dashed off to the south, stopping only momentarily at the crest of the steep hill before taking off in different directions, striking at the disorganized group here, cutting off a straggler there. Fre had spent some time chasing a stray first west then north, and halfway up the next peak before she finally managed to land a telling blow, snapping the mount's rear leg and tumbling the rider. By the time she got back to the southern crest she saw Paulus already engaging the remaining knot of avar near the gold veins just north of the springs. She could see his steel armor glinting in the sunlight and was about to head down to help when a shout behind her got her attention. One of the avar had made it back up the slope and was now in the quarryworks, halfway up the slope!

She shouted out to Paulus and saw him glance up briefly and nod as she indicated the quarry before she took off sprinting that direction. Another wave of nausea passed over her as she moved, but she was soon in the cool soothing shade of the mountain again as she tracked the avar. It was almost directly in front of the temple, and gazing at it with strange fascination, unmoving and disturbingly focused. A hammer hung at it's waist and ornate armor bedecked it's torso. As she approached the unicorn it rode on turned to face her and she could see that it was indeed the avar leader, a female.

The avar blinked twice and settled it's gaze on her as she advanced, drawing her weapon in defiance of the dwarf. Fre felt a surge of adrenaline strike her system as the pair clashed, steel striking iron. The avar swung and she was forced to duck, sending the blow glancing off her raised shield. Her swing, in contrast was weaker, but designed to be deceptive. The blow was predictably deflected but allowed her a counter-move that brought her within reach of the unicorn. Her second blow was stronger, and swifter than the beast could avoid and in a second the animal had been tumbled to the ground.

Annoyingly the avar had simply spread her massive wings and, without losing her bearing, now began advancing on the dwarf again. She had little time but the unicorn still posed a threat and stoically she took a heftly blow to the shoulder that rattled her helmet but gained the time needed for a killing strike to the beast that laid it low. Her arm throbbed where it had been hit but now she was on even footing with the avar. Blow after blow was exchanged and it wasn't long before Fre realized that in this avar she was almost as evenly matched as she had ever seen.

And then, an opening presented itself and she swung, connecting with one of the great wings of the creature. The blow struck, and had the wing itself been more solid, would have sent the avar reeling. As it was the wing crumpled under her fury, broken and grotesquely bent. The avar felt it keenly and grimly focused a string of dangerous attacks at her that she spent all her effort countering. Her arm was becoming sore now where it had been struck and she was having difficulty getting her shield in place fast enough. Grimly she hung on until the flurry seemed to pass and soon enough she found a second opening, destroying the other wing. Had she had time to think about it at that moment it might have struck her amusing to have the avar as immobile as herself, but the deadly hammer of the avar whirled at her again, and again.

Her shield arm grew quickly numb and then soon stopped responding properly. Hardly a moment later she saw, almost ponderously the hammer being brought around and her shield failing to rise to block it. The heavy weapon struck her arm and she felt it shatter under the impact as the metal shield clattered to the ground. In a ferocious counter-attack she launched herself directly at the surprised avar, striking it squarely in the chest. The metal armor bucked and cracked at the blow and the creature was knocked to the ground, sprawling.

Fre stood there, momentarily, catching her breath and grimacing at the pain when, disbelieving, she saw the avar rise again from the ground. Blood flecked the avar's lips and her breathing was labored but she stood firm and irresolute as the pair advanced on each other. Their pace of attacks had slowed, but did not lack the ferocity of battle as the pair circled. Fre scored a heavy blow on her enemy that sent her staggering away, only to return seconds later, limping slightly. But it was Fre herself that too the next blow, on the forarm of her hammer-hand, sending the weapon spinning aimlessly to clatter against the stone floor. She had only a second to stare after it when the next blow caught her and sent her spinning to the ground.

Fre tried to rise, but found her arms would not function anymore and any motion sent a cascade of pain through her. She saw the hammer raise again, and strike her, and then again before she blacked out mercifully.



When next she opened her eyes she thought she saw an demon standing over her. Or maybe it was an angel. She could not be certain. Blackness clung to the edge of her vision and encircled the creature as it bent down and picked her up, as if weightless. She struggled against it, fought it, but the darkness cloaked both the creature and her now. Staring directly into it's face she commanded her body to fight, but it would not respond.

The creature leaned over her, peering at her intently. Gradually the shadow withdrew from the face and left in it's place a leering skull, eye sockets glowing dimly red. She blinked and shuddered and the vision withdrew. In it's place she saw the concerned face of Der Kartoffel, carrying her though the Great hall towards her bedroom, before she blacked out once more. He was whispering to her, but she heard it only faintly as the shadow filled her vision once more.

"Don't worry, Fre. Paulus saved you, and I've got you now."

... I've got you now."

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **January 14, 2010, 02:24:21 am**

Oh, not again... that's another good 4 years bedridden. Great writing all around, Paulus.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 14, 2010, 03:47:32 pm**

(Yeah... sorry about that Fre. You mowed down normal Avar easily enough, but that leader gave you what for before I could get help to you. Thank goodness for steel armor though or you'd have been bludgeoned to death long before. Don't worry, you'll survive, even if it takes forever to heal. Besides, it's not like too many people will outpace you in terms of military training. Almost half the fortress now has

some sort of injury that prevents sparring, and almost all my fighters. Unfortunately with three red wounds and a yellow this may take four years. :()

13th of Malachite year 12 (In the hand of Thesaurusaurus)

By way of report this summer we have been plagued by problems. Construction work has slowed to a crawl so that everyone can lend a hand cleaning up after the skirmish and before we were even done another group of avar ambushed Kolok and Mosus at the foot of the slope. Marksavar too, cowardly blighters. The Hound and Ragnar were working on the delvings near there and responded with such ferocity that, according to others that witnessed it, the entire body of avar were driven back nearly fifty feet before they broke. Though they regrouped twice more near the location their bolts seemed ineffective. Both Ragnar and the Hound took several minor hits and bled from nearly a half dozen injuries before they were finished but despite a complete lack of armor they drove off and slew the group. The Hound slew the leader himself, a swordsavar. Ragnar apparently chuckled when speaking about it, saying:

"Twasn't ever really a fair fight. With what that boy knows about swords and all, he could've faced the avar wit his bare hands and still managed to slit it's throat in a ten count 'r less."

I'm not sure what that is in reference to, but I've only ever seen the Hound use either his hammer or the spade he occasionally wields like a scythe. In either case, he's now standing guard at the entrance in case the other group of marksavar that was spotted to our north become a problem or if any of the strays wanders too close. He's already had to chase down one unicorn that was bothering one of our masons working on the entrance Ramp.

Kolok has also recently informed me of the birth of triplets. At first I was startled, since I knew of none who were married and even less likely the chance of getting triplets, but he then proceeded to speak of the Black bears we obtained from the elves. Apparently he's decided to have the last remaining pair of breeding dogs slaughtered for food as they were 'Disturbin' the wee uns.' Disturbing indeed. In any case, perhaps in time the cubs can be properly trained. I'm told that bears can be almost as intelligent as dogs. Though, considering the source, the parents of the cubs would likely be unsuitable for our needs, and perhaps even this first generation. The elves have a way with animals but their ways are not our ways.

I shall bring this up with Led. Perhaps it would be best to remove the influence of the parents early on from the cubs and let them grow up among us. According to Kolok there are two dams and one sire. Though I'm not sure the terms apply to bears. Perhaps they could be interbred with our captive grizzly? We shall see.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 18, 2010, 06:38:36 pm**

23rd of Limestone Early Autumn

An uncanny silence had descended upon the Trade depot of Geshud Osod. Long since faded were the sounds of elves chatting to each other and coaxing their animals into the room. The beasts had been reluctant to enter the room and a distinct mettalic odor filled the air. Faded too were the sounds of terror and frustrations when the stones slid into place, sealing the exits from that chamber. No more beating on stone doors, no swearing, no traders shouting at the head merchant whose fault it was they were there. Even the sounds of madness had faded, where beast and elf alike had succumbed to thirst, hunger and insanity until they fought amongst themselves for survival. And finally of all the faint hissing of the thrashing mule on the sandy floor had faded, last survivor of the caravan long since forgotten in the musty halls.

The depot remained sealed through the summer, and now that fall had begun it showed no signs of change. Though the High Priest occasionally came to listen to the silence and reflect.

It was there that Der Kartoffel, the group's cook and herbalist caught up with him.

"I noticed some new meat in our barrels and I didn't recognize what it was. I was wondering what would go well with it but wanted to ask you about it's origins first, as you're the butcher."

"The largish sections? Those should be interesting. They're unicorn meat."

"Unicorn? That should make an interesting roast. I suppose I could try treating it like horse. And the other?"

A long pause allowed the silence of the Depot to permeate the conversation.

"Avar."

Der Kartoffel rocked back on his heels a little. That would have been one of his last guesses. "But aren't they..."

"Sentient? Civilized?"

It's hard to tell. They attack us without provocation, are unable to communicate with us and are only distantly related to humans. I just wondered what they tasted like and we had a surplus at the moment."

"Ah... well, I'll see what spices go well with it then...should be an interesting problem."

"Thank you Der Kartoffel."

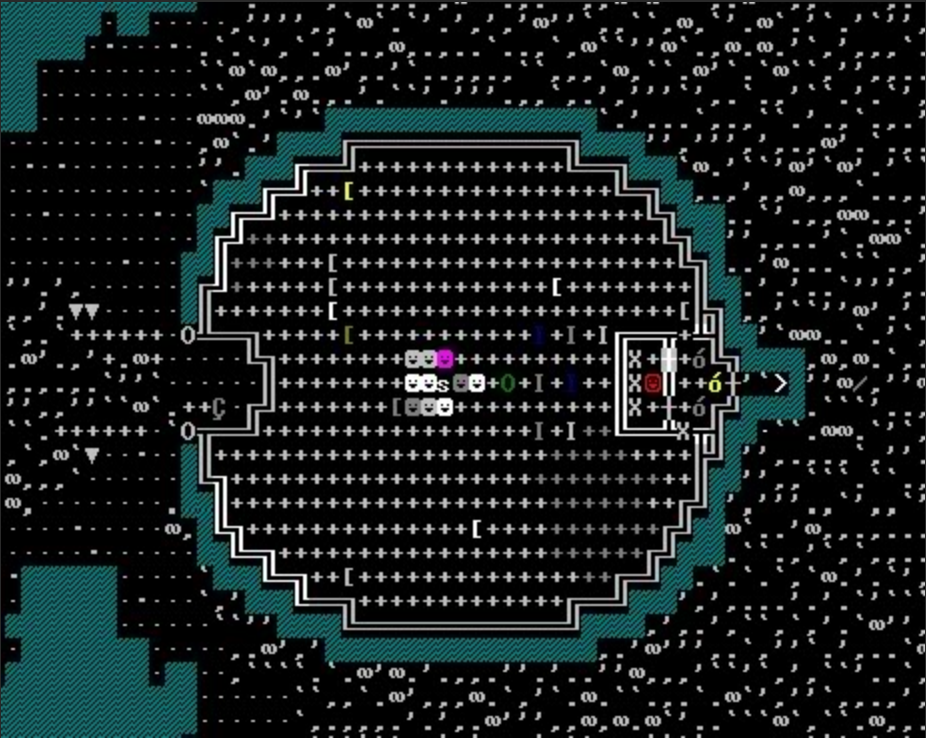
The dwarf bowed lightly to his priest as he left and a faint smile graced his lips.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 19, 2010, 05:03:10 pm**

"My friends." Led's voice echoed off the smooth block walls of the temple. The icy wind howled overhead and the unfinished upper dome let snowflakes float slowly downward in the chill air. Fully nine of the faithful stood with him in their nearly complete worship hall. Behind him stood just over a half dozen cages.

"My Brothers and Sisters in Mondul. We are gathered here again in the sight of Mondul on Her day for trial. With us are those creatures who would impede our work and Her work. Those that would steal our treasures and defile Her halls. They are here for judgement, but it is not we who are the judges only. Their weapons and armor they have retained and in true battle shall we be joined to see whose will is stronger and who shall be taken by Mondul's hand."



At that comment a few of the dwarves shifted their glances ever so slightly to the dwarves on the sides of Led. Sarah stood on his left hand, clad in steel and wielding an impressive looking warhammer. She stood unflinching at the attention and gazed steadfast at her lover and priest. On his other side and clad in a motley assortment of bone and metal stood the Hound. The sight of him in armor was a jumbled image of efficacy and disorder. His chainmail was both brightly polished but nonetheless stained by the blood, ichor, vomit and fluids of countless enemies. He simply looked off in the distance a ways behind the High priest as if oblivious to the rest of the surroundings. Immediatly in front of the priest stood Draconius, most zealous of the worshippers, who had even brought his pet sheep to witness and participate. Glacies stood in the front ranks, as did Morul, their newest comer.

"We hold with us the chosen implements of Mondul's will, for the manners of death are as diverse as the paths we may tread in life. Remember well the lives given this day, what they have been as well as what they will yet be. For surely after our time on this earth we go to Her who calls all eventually, be they mortal or immortal races.

Now! Let her will be done!"

At the shout of now a lever was pulled and the cages sprang open. The insectoids sprang into action all at once and a call went up from many of the dwarves. 'For Mondul' could be heard over the terrible chitter of the insectlike creatures as they turned to flee only to find their way blocked. They turned again to face their captors and no sign of fear or pain crossed their visage. Both Sarah and the Hound had the same idea and quickly singled out the two insectoid guards, engaging them swiftly and decisively while many of the others took to piling on the insectmen and hacking at them savagely. Blow after blow was landed and the first was soon torn apart. The insectmen seemed to feel the fury directed at them and sought to retreat into the corners, but inevitably the swarm of steel-clad dwarves found them.

Even in the chaos of battle, in the hacking and stabbing there were those that fought with reason and with a deadly purpose. Led himself, wielding his steel spear frequently led the knot of others, leading the way and pinning the insects to the ground with his weapon to allow the others to strike. Sarah and Paulus singled out their targets like hunters. But it was one other who claimed the most kills that day.

The cook, Der Kartoffel had chosen as his weapon a finely crafted elven sword made of chestnut and intricately carved. The wooden longsword fit in his hand as if designed and his careful and meticulous thrusts through the masses and into their foes claimed the life of no less than three of the seven foes. It was a lesson that none forgot. Even in the face of overwhelming force a measured blow often strikes most decisively. Even if that weapon were wood.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 22, 2010, 08:10:31 pm**

Year 10 of the Fortress Geshud Osod (In the Hand of Thesaurusaurus)

The year started with a council called together by our High Priest, Led. In attendance were Glacies, in his capacity as Chief Mason, the Hound, representing the clan, and myself. Absent was Fre, Captain of the guard. Status reports requested and given from all in attendance.

Attached is the physical summary per my duties as Clerik (sic)

Dwarf Fortress

FPS: 99t Geshud Osod, "The Fortress of Bones"1st Granite, 13, Early Spring

AnimalsKitchenStoneStocksJustice

Created Wealth: 2005576*Population: 20

Weapons: 12641*Miners 1None

Armor and Garb: 123725*Woodworkers 1None

Furniture: 366940*Stoneworkers 1None

Other Objects: 746356*Rangers 1None

Architecture: 435076*Metalsmiths 1None

Displayed: 296913*Jewelers 1None

Held/Worn: 23925*Craftsdwarves 1None

Imported Wealth: 721809*Nobles/Admins 1None

Exported Wealth: 127107*Peasants 1None

Food Stores: 2085Children 1None

Meat 333Seeds 158Fishing Workers 1None

Fish NoneDrink 478Farmers 1None

Plant NoneOther 1116Engineers 1None

Trained Animals 1None

Other Animals 13Recruits 6

Paulus informs us that the lower mining is nearly finished and we merely await construction of the ramp that will be the proper entrance. The lowermost foundations are finished but the other seven layers have yet to be done. Glacies reported on upper works. Progress slow but steady. In addition several veins of ore have been mined out by the others (those not loyal to Mondul) and we've filled our ore stockpiles so the metalworks can keep busy.

Led requests we focus all our efforts on two things. Completion of the Temple (emphasis on the ramp that will again allow access for caravans) and the removal of visible wealth from the surrounding mountainsides. The second was discussed in depth and we believe that with the stripping of Onol Lened there remains a possibility that the same may be attempted here. Valuable ores will be removed and the resulting caves turned into historical archives which should obscure the veins removed.

27th Granite Early Spring
Thieves have plagued our workers recently as well. Over a dozen have been spotted in the past week, sometimes more than one a day! Two have been caught in our cages and I managed to throttle a little goblin sneak myself. Additionally, a goblin patrol and an avar patrol have been spotted north of us, a ways away and they should pose no problem unless they migrate south. The elven caravan showed up but we send up a smoke sign from the peak that said little more than 'closed'. In any case, we still haven't cleaned up from the last elf ... visit.

24th Hematite Summer
Thieves continue to be a nuisance. We have caught nearly a dozen now in our traps. Mostly insectoids, but also goblins, tigermen and lizardmen. It seems word has gotten out about our presence. Mosus, my son, was injured somewhat when he stumbled upon an insectoid thief. He recieved two large gashes while protecting his face from the creatures strange chitinous protrusions. Lor fortunately was on hand as well and when outnumbered the thief fled. Mosus should recover in a few days.

Our Captain of the guard shows continued improvement as well. Her injuries are on the mend. (Only three yellow wounds now instead of 1 yellow and 3 red.)

5th of Felsite - Year 14 - Late spring

How the time has flown. The year has passed in a blinding flash. We've all been so hard at work and we've had so few interruptions that we've finally finished the ramp. And just in time for trading season. Glacies was relieved, particularly so since two weeks ago an avar patrol of swordsavar were discovered on our south slope. They interrupted work drastically and would have continued to do so had Glacies herself not clad herself in steel and armed herself with an obsidian short sword. I'm told by the masons that her battle was quite a sight. Sword against sword she fought with them, slaying eight, including their leader and along with their mounts, before she tired and Ragnar and the Hound took over the fight.

With the ramp finished Led has ordered the Depot opened and cleaned, and like true dwarves, we've got so much to do there is, even now little time to write. I feel a little guilty for having spent so long without recording the events of the past year, but truly little has happened. The felling of the supports should happen this year still and should provide a marvelous spectacle. To watch from a distance of course. Nine floors of stone collapsing is not something to be near. It's enough to knock anyone to the ground. Not to mention the anticipated dust cloud.

Once that happens of course our structure will be revealed to the world, whereas now it remains hidden. Perhaps we'll have it ready in time for the Fall caravan.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 25, 2010, 04:34:05 pm**

((I've got a video of the great collapse. It went a little faster than I expected so I didn't catch each floor falling with the previous one hitting it and snapping the support but still...

Any recommendations on where to post the cmv file to watch it? I've yet to actually post a video before.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**

Post by: **Frelock** on **January 26, 2010, 12:34:41 am**

((The Map Archive (<http://mkv25.net/dfma/addmovie.php>) has a section for uploading movies.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**

Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 27, 2010, 02:53:09 pm**

27th of Hematite Mid-summer

The normally busy mountainside was devoid of the living. A cardinal flew idly by the stone hillside, flying briefly into an open space in the search for seeds or crumbs, or perhaps some sticks to build it's nest out of. It simply did not understand the dwarven words shouted as it settled onto a large boulder of Felsite to examine the surrounding area for bugs. A small cave spider darted quickly into the open, headed for only it knew what and the bird pounced on it, spearing it once with it's beak before jumping away to observe it. The bird was cautious. It had every reason to be. The cave spiders' venom was deadly to an animal of it's size but the spiders made good food as well.

Suddenly a sharp 'CRACK' rent the warm summer air and the bird looked around in alarm. It saw nothing moving. The roof above it seemed solid, as did the floor beneath and it hopped down again to inspect the, now unmoving, spider. It pecked it again for good measure and then decided it was well and truly dead. More sounds filled the air as it bent down to retrieve the spider and the bird paused. This was unusual and the sound grew in intensity. Already the ground rumbled and the cardinal had only a second to realize the sky was falling before thousands of tons of rock descended upon it like an hurricane of stone.

<http://mkv25.net/dfma/movie-1946-thegreatcollapse>

It was perhaps as many as 10 seconds before the sound subsided and nearly a full hour before the dust finally began to settle. Where

before had been a heavily carved hiside was now open space. A massive cube cut out of the mountain, smoothed on the sides and revealing now, for the first time in it's center, the structure that the dwarves had been toiling on these many years. More shouting filled the air, the sound of dwarves calling out to each other.

"Holy... did you see that?"

"...force of it knocked me down."

"Did it break through?"

"Look! the totems on the shelves have been dislodged!"

Chaos ensued for a few brief moments before the miners gathered up on the walls to inspect the damage. Paulus, Ragnar, Sarah and erith surveyed the scene. Ragnar spoke with a soft chuckle.

"That'll give the masons some stone ta work with for another decade or so!"

Below them the quarry stretched around the structure like a cradle. Vast amounts of stone, shattered and in large pieces, lay strewn haphazardly around the quarry, created with the final culminating stroke of the shovel. The stroke that freed the upper level.

Sarah nodded, still somewhat awestruck by the sight of the mountainside collapsing. It had happened faster than she expected. It had happened faster than they all expected.

"Let's assess the damage. Looks like part of the ceiling of the Depot collapsed."

"Aye, I can see the hole. Roof was packed sand, must have shifted too much. Doesn't look like anything fell on it."

"Funny that. Well, let's get it patched up and cover it with sand again so it can't be seen." Paulus' voice rang out clearly. "Looks like the bridges were struck as well. See... both spans shattered and fell. We'll have to get those done first if we're to get back down to the valley."

"And the dust cloud looks like it dislodged almost all the totems from their places. I'll let Glacies know we'll need some stairs and spans built to access those again."

"Sarah, while you're at it, let Glacies know we'll probably want the upper quarry cleared of stone first so have the new masons workshops set up there. We'll get to the quarry proper in due time."

She nodded briefly and began making her way below.

"Ragnar, erith? Led wanted as many of the veins as are readily visible in our immediate vicinity removed. I suppose that's next on the docket for the miners. Pete informs me we still have plenty of space in the storerooms."

Erith nodded quietly but Ragnar continued surveying the area briefly, and so the other headed below.

"What'll ye be doin' then lad?"

"It's back to the Crack for me. I figure with another few weeks work there I'll have gotten close enough to the underground lake to find a place to breach it properly and begin work on installing a proper well. No more of this bucket work across half the mountain range."

Ragnar merely nodded. The crack didn't bother her as much as it used to and there was a newfound bouyancy in her step.

"How long you reckon it'll be before the temple is finished?"

"Fully? Oh, it'll be another five years or so by my estimate. If Glacies get's the walls done in three it'll take another two to finish the interior work. Perhaps longer."

Ragnar didn't comment until Paulus had walked away. Her voice came out as only a whisper, as if to herself.

"Then I've still got time."

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 28, 2010, 01:56:54 pm**

18th of Galena Late Summer

Fre cursed lightly under her breath as she worked the heavy piece of copper wire around in the lock. She'd practiced this before. By the abyss, she'd had little else to do. Fortunately Oddbodd had been obliging and had even explained the mechanics behind the locks they used on the doors. But the ones she had practiced on were different enough, and those differences were costing her time. It's not that she feared detection. Few enough came into the rooms near the Crack except to bring refuse or bones to the dump. And none of those would think to check around the corner on the locked door that simply lead to the lower road and the tombs. They were locked for a reason. For the same reason that she was breaking in.

She relaxed a bit and stretched her hands in silence. It still hadn't been long since she had enough strength in her limbs to use them properly again. And she'd been somewhat concerned about her loss of manual dexterity. But that was returning. Now if only she could work out that twinge in her neck from the Avar hammer that still caused her problems from time to time. She studied the lock, inserting the copper wire again and probing the dimensions and direction of the lock. Removing it again she bent it ever so slightly and inserted it once more before twisting it in the mechanism again. A barely audible 'click' sounded and she grinned in spite of herself.

She let herself in through the door, and took the time to lock it behind her again. A simpler procedure now that she'd gotten the approximate shape already down. The air was, as always, cool in the Accursed Crack, and as she descended the stairs to the low road and bridge that lead across the chasm. From there it was a simple matter of ascending the stairs again to the hall. The doors were closed but open here and she could here the sounds of a barrel being moved from inside. She opened the door softly and left it open, padding across the room to the table and the open archway into the storerooms. She smiled slightly as she saw Paulus again, sitting on a barrel with another open next to him. The sweet smell of rum filled the air as he drank deeply from his flask and she stood now in the doorway taking in the sight and sounds. As he drained his mug he swished the liqueur around in his mouth, savoring the flavor.

"Where can a lass get a drink around here?"

The mug continued to drain but Fre couldn't help but notice that Paulus' other hand twitched ever so slightly closer to his spade, propped up next to him. He finished his drink and shook his head in surprise.

"Fre, as I live and breathe. Good to see you up and about again."

"Meh, I got tired of being sober. You got another mug around here?"

He fished up another mug from among the barrels and wiped it out before passing it to her.

"What are ye doing here? I thought I had the doors locked."

"And you did. But I heard you were here keeping all the fun to yourself while the rest of the fort had to work. That just won't do. You're

going to have to share."

Paulus looked at her and then at her arms, recalling, undoubtedly in his mind, the injuries sustained not long before.

"If you're up for it. I suppose I can find something for you to swing that piece at."

Fre grinned, patting the warhammer at her side. "Good, good. I could use a good workout. Now, let me see what we got over here... oooh, that's where the barrel of Longland beer went to.

So, where are ye working in the crack now?"

Paulus was half-filling his mug again. "Oh... about a league or two south of here. Almost at the lake. I've spotted a group or two of gremlins, and another of trogs."

"Gremlins? Those wee things?" Fre laughed "I won't even need to use my hammer for those."

Paulus shrugged. "Probably not. You could crush them bare-handed. But they're usually in groups of twenty or so, and the dead tend feel no fear or pain. They're not bad, but keep your helmet on or they may go for your eyes and throat. Annoying little bastards."

Fre chuckled again.

"But not as bad as the cave swallowmen?"

"Oh don't even get me started on those limp-wristed, spineless, elf-kissin' bags of refuse. Gremlins got nothing on them for sheer maliciousness. They've nearly drug me into the abyss a half dozen times at least. You've got to trick them into coming on solid ground to even fight them or they'll try to drag you off."

"I'll keep that in mind. So, what're the living arrangements like here?"

Paulus grunted. "Only one table and one chair." He looked her over. "And only one bed."

Fre laughed lightly. "And I suppose you'll be the gentleman and sleep on the floor?"

"Hah, first come first served."

They talked and drank for a while before getting serious again and the pair headed off soon to the south, Paulus showing Fre the newly carved paths of the Accursed Crack.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **January 28, 2010, 02:45:50 pm**

((Out of curiosity, is Fre the hammerdwarf in the census, or the elite marksdwarf?))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **January 28, 2010, 03:36:56 pm**

((Due to skill levels she is the elite marksdwarf. I believe at the time Sarah (our one time Hunter of Bones) is the Hammerdwarf in the census. Though Fre's skill at the hammer is, I believe, Competent.

The census was taken while all the cultists were still enlisted for the Dying Day ritual.

And don't worry. You'll get some use of the crossbow again. I can't think of any other way to remove the undead infestation from my lake... short of draining the entire thing into the abyss.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 08, 2010, 05:59:41 pm**

Thafatha sat in meditation at the top of the peak near the main residence of the Heaven of Nourishment. The mountain-top provided a place of relative peace and solace, at least physically. If his people needed him they could simply reach out to him with their minds. Inwardly he marveled again at the adaptability of the human race, but though thoughts of such things always let him back to before the establishment of their settlement of Orderheavens or even the construction of his bastion, The Fortress of Communion. The war that had waged had lasted centuries, with the races of Light and Order on one side and the races of Darkness and Chaos on the other. He had been there when the Bastion of the Poisoned Soul had been assaulted and the demon and undead hordes had been driven deep within their fort. It had been he, and his allies, humans, elves and dwarves combined had fought against the undead hordes and demons that poured from the rifts deep in the fortress, that had driven them back inside the fortress and cast the spell to seal them within while the goodly gods struck a blow of their own. He had not counted on the spell being twisted and found himself trapped in limbo for nearly a millenia. Trapped, along with a few of the survivors of that assault, among them, the human Avaya. A smile graced his face as he thought of his love, she who had born him so many children. And of those children who had survived and grown. Those children who now revered him as a Power, and through whose devotion he had grown strong again. Those children he had led here after the shattering of their prison and founded this place with.

"My lord?"

The voice rang out in his head, feebly, as if from great distance. He sent his own thoughts out, chasing after it, strengthening the mental ties of his descendant.

"Fiya, I am glad you are well. What can you tell me?"

"The news is not good I'm afraid." Images flowed along with the thoughts, images of a broken mountainside, infested with undead. And of something far larger and more terrible being constructed on a hillside to the south.

"Is that where they are?"

"Yes, my lord. I sent out a patrol to evaluate and they were found out. I fear the young guard panicked and they were attacked and hunted until driven away, but that is what they saw before they perished. And only a single dwarf opposed them. Unarmored but wielding a spade of the earthskin metal she slew nearly a dozen of the patrol, along with their mounts."

"It seems then that the dwaves have lost none of the prowess they held in ages gone by when it comes to their metalwork, nor their fighting prowess. But to have them so clearly building again the Bastion of the Poisoned Soul troubles me. Remain in the area. I shall send you re-inforcements. Gain what knowledge you may while there. For we shall need it when we go to war."

"Shall it truly come to that? Shall we have to re-assail the Bastion again in this age?"

"I had hoped not, but now it seems that it must be. The war never truly ended, and now it seems that it shall begin anew, and in earnest. I shall convene a war council and seek out my brethren, though it may cost me much. We cannot allow it to be rebuilt. That which has been destroyed should not be rebuilt."

"I shall await your commands, my Lord."

"Thank you for your devotion Fiya Heavenstamed. I shall do what I can to watch over you."

The winds swirled around the avatar as he sat in thought. The sun set, bringing with it a primal chill, but he was beyond such concerns as he struggled within to compose his words and the course of action, both for himself and for all his people. There were others that would hearken to his calls, and his warnings. And if they did not heed him now, they would heed him soon enough. For such a place could simply not be concealed for long. Such a bastion of chaos would taint the very land around it, were that still possible, for he knew the mountains themselves had been corrupted long ago. In all those ages of his imprisonment only death had stalked those hills.

Death and hell.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 09, 2010, 05:09:17 pm**

22nd of Limestone Journal of Led, High Priest

For the first time in three years (or has it been four now?) the merchants arrived with their wagons to trade with us. I was admittedly somewhat surprised since they brought five full wagons as well as a number of beasts of burden. As we are running low on supplies of drink they were a welcome sight, despite the concern we had about noble machinations. We were not surprised on either count.

They did bring plenty of drink, as well as bars of metal and some gemstones, in addition to a surprising amount of steel armor. Shellhelms apparently is doing well in the steel industry. We traded them the *surplus* avar and elf clothing and armor that we had obtained the last few years. They seemed particularly interested in the avar material, as many of the styles and designs of the armor seemed unusual. Lor had a hefty supply of the common stone trading trinkets. I say common, but they are truly exceptional quality, though unadorned and simple stone.

Unfortunately our actual trade was the only good news they had. Further stories of the sacking of Onol Lened reached my ears from them, though they seemed to not regard it as a significant loss. The diamond mines continue to put out surprising amounts of valuable stones. And the veins of silver, copper and iron are still being found. What I regret is that each active settlement is being called upon to help pay off our national debt. King Tosid, perhaps wisely, wants to pay it off as quickly as possible, since, from what I've heard, the humans are now charging exhorbitant interest.

The head merchant presented me with a letter stating that as of next year a settlement of our size would be expected to contribute no less than fifty silver bars worth a year of our most abundant valuable metal directly to the kingdom coffers. The merchants spotted us bringing in both iron and copper from the mountainsides and have listed those two as our primary metal exports. I suppose we should consider it fortunate that they have not been allowed into our forgehalls to see the stockpiles of gold bars as well. We are careful though to only allow them access to the Tradehall itself and the paths to Fre's beerhall, the Bold Anvil.

I have sent apologies to the Merchants office and the King for disallowing trading here for the last few years and have gifted the king a pair of fine avar and unicorn skull totems for each year missed. On the topic of gifts I received a letter from an old nobleman acquaintance of mine. Back when I had been a younger hunter I had been contracted to escort him through the wilds in search of wild Pegasi for his studies. He had been training to be a Dungeon master at the time. I've thanked him for his letter and sent him a pair of Unicorn skull totems. He should find them interesting at the very least and the merchants seemed to indicate that the unicorn totems in particular were quite valuable. Each masterful Unicorn skull totem I produced had been listed in their ledgers as being worth 1200 ingots. They themselves were unsure why, just that fantastical creatures body parts tended to make them commensurately more valuable. I wonder what they'd say to the delicious unicorn roasts that Der Kartoffel has been making for us all? They certainly taste good and I've been feeling as fit as a stone fiddle for some time now.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **sonerohi** on **February 11, 2010, 12:01:59 am**

((These updates are like crack)).

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 11, 2010, 06:26:46 pm**

((I'm still working on this but between travel, illness, moving and starting to write a dissertation I've been pretty busy. I do get a chance to play from time to time though and plan on continuing.))

The small piece of heavy wire was already growing warm in her hand when Fre heard the satisfying click and the tumbler inside the lock moved. She grinned again, knowing that though she'd picked this lock before she still managed to cut her time in half. Or nearly so.

As she descended the staircase the air again grew cold. It seemed perpetually cold in the Accursed Crack, despite the summer warmth beginning to permeate the rest of the fortress. The forges had been running again as well and that always warmed things up too. But none of that warmth touched here. The air grew stale and fouler as she descended, and that too, she knew, was unlikely to change unless they installed some air pumps or vent shafts down to here. A very unlikely prospect given the state of things and general lack of available dwarf-power.

The lower road wound it's way along the Crack, going up and down at seeming random and breaking open on one side from time to time to provide a view of the crack from natural grottoes in the rock faces. The stone formations in these remained, by and large, untouched and had it not been for the smell it would have easily been a beautiful place. Of course, the bones and skulls of the undead still littered the floor, lending it an otherwise natural gruesomeness that said other beauty came at a cost and casual attention to your surroundings may just leave you as another pile on the floor. Or worse. Her thoughts turned from her original intentions here, to the undead. No one had considered studying them, figuring out why they rose here in these mountains.

Was it some sort of affliction? No, these creatures were not living. No disease she knew of could do such things. That left the natural realm of possibility to one side. Some dark magic? There was a line of reasoning that could be dangerous. Magic was ill understood in these times, though evidence of it was abundant enough. In ages past it had flourished more and perhaps some of that residual energy trapped the souls in this place. Were the mountains themselves evil? Could such a thing be? Few of the dwarves willingly crossed the Crack and it seemed almost as if a sense of oppresiveness could be felt the deeper into the mountains one went.

Fre heard a noise ahead of her, a soft grunt, and her sense instantly went alert, steel warhammer snapping up and above her right shoulder, ready to strike. Her pace slowed and she listened again. There was sound of motion ahead of her and she began to quietly stalk the sound in the semi-darkness that her inherent dwarven vision granted her. The stone tunnels she walked were newly excavated, or looked like it at least. At last she broke through into a large chamber and turned cautiously towards the sound. Before her a mound of undead flesh appeared to be trying to claw or chew something on the ground underneath it. As she drew closer she started, realizing just now that the mound was a zombie troll. One that had a High steel spade passing cleanly through it's rib-cage and sticking out it's back in a splay of gore. The shaft of the spade was underneath it at an awkward angle, pinning it just off the ground.

A tired voice growled out of the darkness.

"Get this thing off me!"

Hearing Paulus' voice she sprang into instant action, rushing the creature and smashing it off her fallen friend with a single blow. The carcass hit the wall with a rubbery thump and in a heartbeat she was at it's side, crushing though rotten flesh and cartilage to smash the spine of the beast against the stone floor, splintering it's throat and nearly decapitating it. It stopped thrashing and she turned to see Paulus wearily getting to his feet.

"I'm glad you came, Fre. I was starting to get tired."

"You ok? What happened?"

"Bah, I'm fine, hardly a scratch on me. But I ran into that behemoth and my spade got stuck, couldn't get it out to save my life. Literally. Tried beating the thing to death with my hands but got stuck underneath it when it fell. I managed to pin it away from me with an arm but couldn't reach the spade handle. If I let go of the thing it would have probably tried tearing my face off with it's teeth before I could use the spade as leverage. I couldn't move and it couldn't get to me. Don't know how long we've been like that. What day is it?"

"27th of Moonstone. How long have you been like that?"

"Close as I can reckon we've been fighting for nearly a week and a half. Pinned for most of that."

She shook her head. "You're lucky I came along. I had the impression I should come to check on you, I put Led and Ragnar on watch up at the ramp."

Even in the darkness she could make out his head tilting to one side and picture his eyebrow raising. His voice remained neutral though.

"Come see how far we are."

"You're through to the lake?"

He grinned as he brushed himself off, smelling his hand afterwards and quickly pulling his nose away. "Aye, and getting a room ready for a well. C'mon, I need to clean a bit of this off at least and I can show you. Had a bit of a problem digging the well itself. Came a little too close to the lake and the pressure widened a crack. Not a direct hole mind, but enough to fill the room. Pity too, was a nice aluminum cluster I wanted to remove first."

"It's a good thing the water's cold, or the place would be vile with the undead critters in it and all."

"I was hoping you might be able to take care of that sometime... Perhaps bring your crossbow. Only other thing I can think of would be to flush them all into the Crack. And that get's rid of our water too."

The pair continued to converse as they went. The well room was small, and squarish with only a hole in the floor where the well would eventually go. A small northern door led downwards into the well chamber, with a central stair heading down into the water that lay cold and dark beneath them. A small masonry shop had been set up in the corner. The entrance to the room came from below it but a tunnel had been cut out straight to the Crack. It was there the two stood, surveying the crack again.

"How many more undead in here you suppose?" Fre's voice was calm, almost conversational.

Paulus shrugged. "Hard to say. In the inhabitable regions? Still probably in the hundreds. I think I can spot one of those winged blighters there off to the south and down a ways."

Fre nodded and changed the tack. "Why cut a path from the room out to here? There were no natural caverns here, just the Crack itself."

Paulus grinned again and Fre knew almost instantly that he had something in mind. "You've got plans for it I take it?"

He nodded. "Aye, I've got plans. Boink's been helping me, though she's been none to happy of late working in this place. Gives here the creeps I think. But she's been working on glass blocks."

"Glass? What for?"

Paulus smiled enigmatically. "Well, you know how I keep calling the paths below the lower road? Doesn't make much sense in calling it that unless you have an upper road as well..."

Fre gawked at him for a second. "No... tell me you're not serious? You're planning on building a GLASS road at the top of the Accursed crack along one wall?"

"No."

She sighed a little. "Good."

"I plan on building a road as wide as the crack itself along it's entire length, entirely out of glass, with an iron framework. Then I plan on having the walls smoothed and our history carved on them. This 'Crack' will become both the repository of the knowledge of our people. I've done tests of it. The crack runs for leagues in both directions. It could be an underground road along our entire holding."

Fre threw up her hands. "Males. Megalomaniacs the lot of them. Well, you can't have all the glass. I've got plans of my own that Kolok is helping me with. I'm planning an expansion of the Bold Anvil."

He nodded. "That's fine. This is a long term goal anyways. I still need to clean the place."

"Why can't you do anything small?"

He shrugged. "Because I'm a dwarf."

As if that sentence explained it all.

A booming echoed through the crack then, punctuated beats reverberating through the stone. They turned as one. "The alarm!" It was a very, very long ways back. They might not get there in time for any fun.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **scuba** on **March 11, 2010, 07:28:04 pm**

Can I request a dwarf. male,named ascubis sworddwarf plz and thx

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **March 14, 2010, 01:54:07 pm**

((Great update, Paulus. Take as long as you need for the next one. You said the one word which I feel excuses a person from basically the rest of their life: dissertation. Good luck!))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 16, 2010, 07:34:43 pm**

Led stood relaxed near the top of the ramp as he surveyed the surrounding country side. This was a beautiful land, that much was evident to him, and he had spent much of his life out of doors. His gaze flicked behind him again. A single Insectoid corpse lay on the smooth stone of the upper ramp, not thirty feet from the entrance to their home. The thief had made it that far before it had been detected. In the subsequent flurry of activity two more had been found, and one dwarf lightly injured, receiving a light cut on one arm where another insectoid thief had reacted instinctively. Fortunately for Mosus she'd gotten her arm in the way or she might have lost an eye.

There was little doubt that the thieves were getting bolder in their attempts. This year had been particularly bad. Below him on the ramp Kolok had a large pine log in tow and was laboriously dragging it up the ramp when he nearly stumbled upon yet another insectoid. In the time it took the lumberdwarf to drop the log the insectoid had already begun running and Led took off after it. Controlling his running descent down the ramp in full armor took all his attention for a second but as he neared the bottom he glanced southwards and could still make out the insectoid form crashing through the brush and soft soil of the swamps, heading towards the spring and creek to their south. He loped easily after it, beginning to gain ground on the quick-footed creature as the pair began speeding south in a deadly race. He skirted close to the hillside, gaining more solid footing and hoped to gain on it in that way as well when a blood-curdling cry from behind him rent the air and drew him up short.

An Ambush!

Cursing himself for his short-sightedness he realized only then that the thief must have been meant as a lure, and he'd taken the bait. Ragner was undoubtedly still below, finishing her drink and that left the fortress nearly wide open. Nearly. He made a direct line for the ramp, crashing through the underbrush as pained cries filled the air and then went abruptly silent, his breathing filling the strange silence. The ramp was approaching when he broke through the heavy shrub into the cleared area that would eventually become a large pool. A body lay in the deep grass, blood spraying the flora around it. Over it still stood an insectoid and Led charged it. He must have caught it by surprise, as the creature barely had time to register his presence before his spear caught it in a shoulder, knocking it over and to the ground. The spear was wrenched from his grasp as the creature fell but he was on it in a flash, grinding the spear in the wound as the insectoid below it flailed in the soft soil. He yanked it out violently and scythed it downwards, catching one of the creature's wings and then a leg and crippling them. The insectoid managed to bring one of it's arms around and caught him in the leg and he felt the sudden pain where the chitinous blade tore through his joint and into his knee. He would have fallen had he not embedded his spear in the creature's abdomen and his weight suddenly fell full force on it bringing the insectoid to a thrashing halt as pain flooded it.

It was then that a second cry of alarm went up and Led felt a sudden foreboding. The creature beneath his spear was rapidly dying now, but he spared a glance for his fallen comrade and was surprised to see Fikod's body, violently flayed on one side. He had expected it to be Kolok and the loss of one of his own struck him almost like a physical blow. Looking up his spirits fell further as he saw another group of insectoids heading up the ramp. Three split off upon seeing him and began advancing and he yanked the spear out of the fallen foe to face the deadly trio. He was limping badly and a sudden grimness took him as he faced his doom.

He did not fear death. He did not fear facing his goddess in person. But he was not ready to go to the next world so easily. He was a dwarf and he was protected by steel and had a good weapon in his hand. He was equal to almost any foe and he faced the insectoids with singleminded determination to protect his friends and the faithful of Mondul. His life was in her hands and if she took it to herself he would not begrudge her his soul.

And then he grinned at the three.

But he'd much rather grant Mondul their spirits instead.

The lead insectoid he took mid-charges with his spear, solidly in the upper chest, throwing himself forward and bringing the creature to an abrupt halt. He lost his balance briefly but retained hold of the spear and that, perhaps, was his salvation. The insectoid fell backwards, dragging him forward and steadying him. He danced around the creature on the ground, doing his best to avoid the other two even as he ground the spear into the wound, thrashing the internals of the creature before him. The scrape and squeal of chitin on steel reminded him that he could do a better job but a shout from above caused his focus to flicker to the ramp briefly before he continued his deadly dance.

Ragnar had heard the alarm and had calmly finished her mug of sewer brew before shouldering her spade and heading back up the stairs. The panicked shouts from the First Hall made her pick up her pace rapidly and her primary feeling at the time was a building annoyance at having her drinking so rudely disturbed. Coming out of the stairwell she realized it was far worse than that. Four or five creatures were busy vivisecting a dwarf along the side of the bridge what few others she saw were panicked and heading towards the armory. There was no time to wait. She spared a fraction of a second to wonder where Led had gone to before charging out of the fortress into the wan sunlight of early winter. Her annoyance gave way quickly to rage as she charged and recognized poor Pete, likely heading out to the hillside to retrieve some iron ore to smelt. By the looks of it the lass never stood a chance and the fire of anger suddenly flared within her. It burned with a cold heat though and her charge led her straight into the ranks of the enemy. She crashed into the one closest her with such force that her blow split the creature from mandibled head down to it's abdomen, practically shattering the creature. The others reared up in anger or annoyance, she hardly cared which and her spinning scythe of a spade removed an arm here, a leg there. Two more fell before her as three more came up the ramp and began surrounding her. She spun and dodged her opponents but keeping her single eye out for all their attacks seemed impossible and she took several grazing hits. She felled another, cleanly removing it's head and sending it bouncing down off the ramp as the insectoids seemed to sense her weakness. One charged her in a faint while the others rushed her blind side and impossibly quickly she suddenly realized that she was falling. Her foes were growing distant above her and the wind was rushing strangely past her helmet and through her armor.

It occured to her then how strange it felt to have wind rushing through her armor when she wore nothing underneath.

And then she hit the ground.

It was, perhaps, a blessing for the fortress that Thesaurusaurus was on hand as well. The four remaining insectoids watched briefly as their feared foe fell to the earth below but his shout brought their attention around to the task at hand. The defenders appeared dispatched and an unarmed and unarmored dwarf stood before them, as if in surprise. As they ran after him he too took off and they could only barely match him for speed, but there was only one way to go.

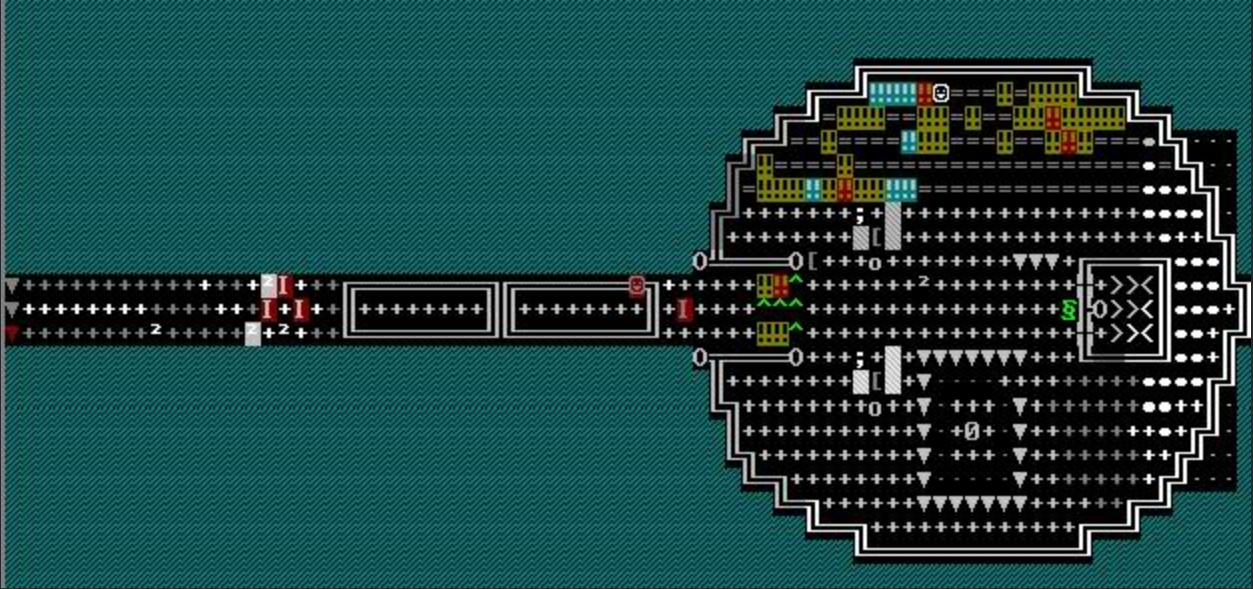
In.

And so in they went, directly past the bridge and Pete's corpse and straight into the waiting cage traps set for exactly such occasions. Thesaurusaurus knew there were only nine traps, or rather three strings of three traps each, covering the entrance. And he managed to lure the creatures in perfectly, snaring all four of them without further incident.

Ragnar made perhaps the scariest sight as not ten minutes later she was seen staggering down the stairwell headed for her bed, muttering almost incoherently and clutching her mangled hand. Apparently even a fall of over eighty feet (8 z levels) was insufficient to do her serious lasting harm. Though it certainly did nothing to improve her disposition.



As the battle sounds quieted the others came to witness the scene and share in the death of friend and foe alike. Fikod's loss would be felt, most keenly among the followers and it left Boink as the remaining stonecarver of the fortress. Pete's loss was felt perhaps more poignantly by the other members of the clan. She'd come through much with them and taught them much as well.



Led survived as well. Though injured he managed to dispatch all three insectoids without further injury, though Morul had to retrieve him. The brewer and most recent addition to their fortress had only gotten to speak to him twice before and she took advantage of the opportunity to introduce herself properly.



"S no problem sir. I don't normally go out of my way ta do things like this, mind, but I suppose I can make an exception for you. Sir."

Led was quiet for a time. "I appreciate it. I'm afraid I'll be bedridden for a bit while this recovers. Can I have you do me some favors?"

"I suppose... like what?"

"Ask Glacies to come see me as soon as possible. I'll have to ask her to perform the final rites for Fikod. And for Pete if the others consent."

"When do you suppose the other followers will come from Onol Lened?"

The sudden change in topic startled him somewhat but there was nothing to conceal where nothing was known. "I'm not sure. The humans haven't come and we've been unable to send correspondence through them. I tried sending a message with the dwarven caravan, but who knows if it will arrive."

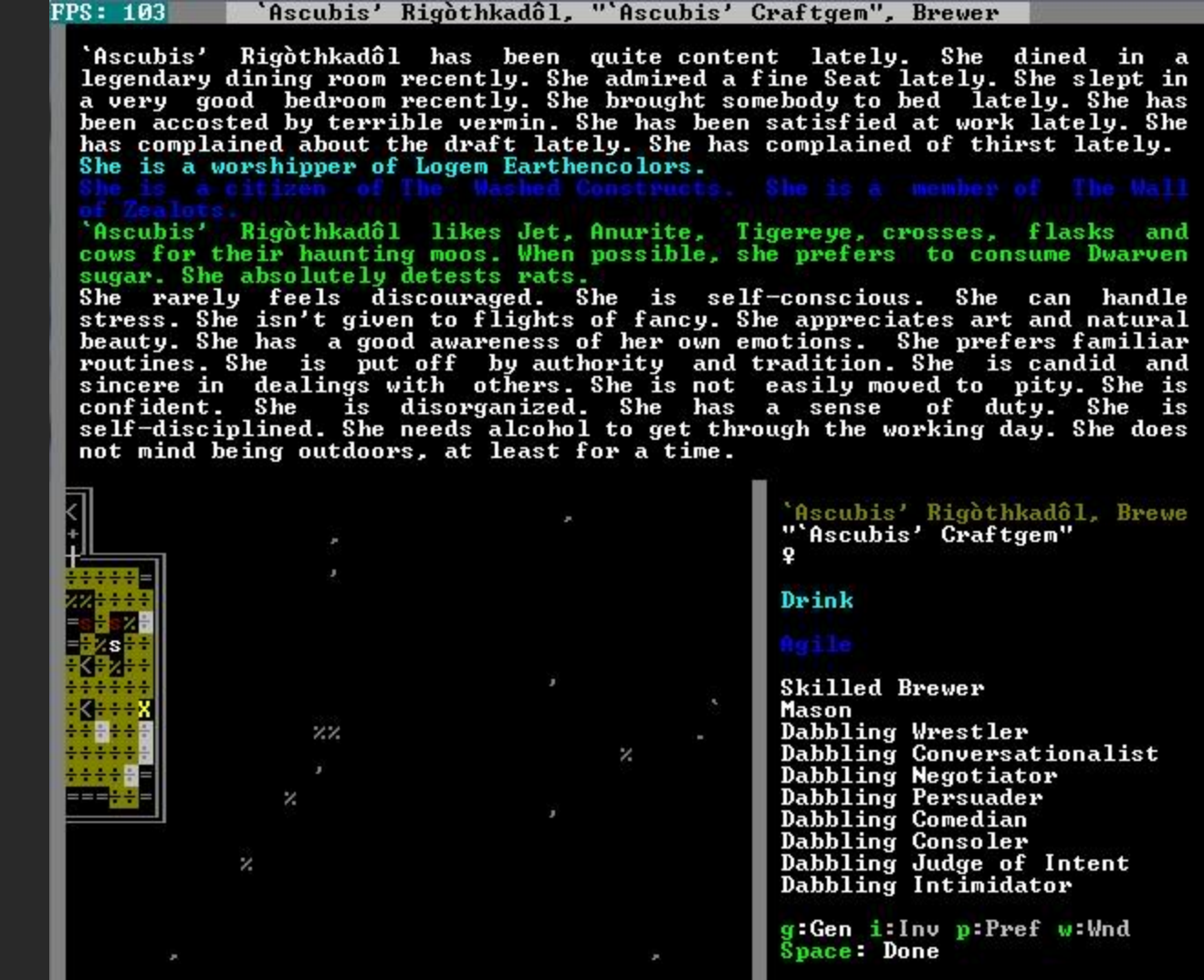
"Ah, true. Was just wondering."

"It's alright... easy on the leg there. What was your name again? Mosus, Morul... something like that?"

"Morul, sir. At least my birth name. My parents just called me Ascubis though."

He nodded, weary now from the efforts. "Mmm... you must have had interesting parents."

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **masam** on **March 22, 2010, 01:21:10 pm**

I'm stepping in after reading your incredibly, incredibly detailed and well written begining of the fahlstrom clan...and I wish to add Swordsdwarf to your little (massive) fortress. His name will be Masenik, a dwarf cut off from his clan for the crime he committed when pushed to his limits.

He now searches for a new home, offering himself up to those who need either a swift sword, or rocks mined. One day he hopes that his hard work and pennance will have him accepted by his dwarfy brethren once more.

(Yea, it's a *bit* melodramatic. ;) I do have an idea for him to be branded as one who is clanless. That fit with your overall scheme? i didn't notice anything contrary, but it has taken me 9 days to get through your thread so i probably lost some of it.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **March 23, 2010, 06:11:58 pm**

((Masam, your request for dwarfing has been approved. I'm below my population cap so I could get an immigrant wave any time now. I'll see that you're in it. You might even get a male dwarf.))

28th of Obsidian, dying of the year

It seemed to be the most appropriate time for the funeral as the dwarves of Geshud Osod gathered in the unfinished temple of Mondul. Two of their sisters had perished and lay on polished granite slabs much as they had looked in life. Pete's arm had been severed in the battle and after much searching in the moist grassland below the ramp it had been recovered and lay in it's normal position, tied in place with a piece of cave spider silk cloth, the white of the silk contrasting slightly against Pete's forge-tanned skin. Fikod's remains had been swathed somewhat as well, if only to keep her various parts together. The Insectoids had been uncommonly savage. Next to them lay the small cat body of Inod. The poor animal had been injured years before and never truly recovered. After nearly two years of limping around on her three injured legs she'd fallen in a cage trap and it had been decided to leave her in it, for her own safety. The three corpses lay silent and cold.

The dwarves around them gazed on in silence as well, and were little warmer as the harsh winter cold pervaded thoroughly.

Glacies stood, irresolute and spoke a few words, as devoid of warmth as the air that whipped by them, stealing their frosty breath. And then in unison staves were produced and the stone slabs were carried, eight dwarves per fallen (excluding the cat, who, lacking an owner was later unceremoniously dumped in the refuse stockpile). The procession led below, winding slowly and silently down the long staircase to the central hall and from there through the sturdy stone doors into the Accursed crack itself. The stone span going across the top of the chasm trembled as the dwarves marched in cadence with their heavy load and then to another stairwell, taking them down, deep into the earth.

The dwarves split near their destination, the followers of Mondul taking Fikod's body to his final rest, a small enclosure of an unusual stone deposit in the back of a copper vein. The eyes of the bearers lit up as they entered the vein. Few had been down here before, if ever and the floor gleamed, bright copper streaks showing through. The walls had been intricately carved with scenes from the fortress, work that Fikod herself might have done had she been able to. Boink had done the vein justice though. Two adorned statues graced the entrance to Fikod's resting place and an intricate mica coffin lay waiting to receive her.



Pete's tomb was smaller than the vein, but certainly not less ornate. Decorations of the fortress and life were present here in more abundance. Boink had known Pete enjoyed life, as Fikod had worshipped death and the engravings reflected it. Scenes from around the fortress dotted the walls, often elaborate and very detailed. The creation of no less than four of the fortresses artifacts was depicted in the panels. In addition to the twin statues by the entrance to the room another statue rested behind the coffin of Pete. It's gold surface was untarnished and dust free, as one would naturally expect. It was an almost life sized image of the dwarf, created by Oddbodd for Pete's tomb and Pete's leather forge apron was tied in place and her hammer rested in her hand, much as it had in life.

Paulus, Fre, Boink, Oddbodd, Kolok and Der Kartoffel carried the heavy stone slab into the room, along with erith and Morul, who left to pay their respects to Fikod after setting the slab carefully on the floor in front of Pete's coffin. Those who knew her best gently picked her up while the others removed the mica lid to her coffin. In her honor and for her dedication it had been decided that the coffin Kebulumar was a worthy resting place for one that had taught them so much about their new world. The mica receptacle was polished to utmost smoothness and glittered as if covered with gemstones in the lantern-light, sending of dancing motes of reflected light across the room and out into the Crack itself. The coffin was banded and studded with mica as well and it seemed as if each feature on the coffin itself was designed to reflect light in myriad directions, sending cascades of small sparkles in all directions whenever light played across any surface.

It was a tomb to be proud of, and those she had worked with laid her gently to rest and sealed her tomb.

Never again to look upon the ruddy face of their dilligent metalworker and smith.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **April 30, 2010, 05:05:19 pm**

22nd of Granite

Fre was chuckling to herself as she entered the Bold Anvil. Now that she was up and moving again she'd taken charge of the establishment once more and had been pleased to find that Der Kartoffel and Morul, or rather, Ascubis, had taken good care of it. The food left something to be desired in her mind but then, they still ran everything out of the small kitchen originally build to see to the culinary needs. It would serve for now.

A trip to the stock room below was a little less heartening. Rats and lizards scurried freely about among the barrels and with chagrin even Fre admitted that a cat would be useful. Perhaps they should request that one be imported. Preferably a tom. It was always safer that way. Despite her absence Der Kartoffel and Morul had managed to keep the fortress well supplied in both good food and drink, and even though technically they didn't charge for any of the food or services provided it seemed that Der Kartoffel had done well as manager, making small deals on the sides for the 'better' foods and drinks. It seems that the newly discovered flavor of unicorn had taken and there had been a general clamor for it.

In any case, Fre, felt good. In higher spirits that in quite some time. Der Kartoffel, idly polishing the bar with a grimy mouldering rag that looked like it once might have been his shirt noticed her and inclined his head.

"How're thing Fre?"

"Oh, lookin' up. Lookin' up. Heh."

"Anything you need?"

"Give me a mug of the aged rum, third small barrel on the left. It's been a while since I've sampled it."

"Sure. Not much of it left. We were running low for a while before Morul, er.. I mean Ascubis joined us. But there's still this one and I think one or two others that are tucked away behind here."

Fre smiled widely. There was considerably more than that, she knew. Ragnar still kept a largish stash in his lower room and Paulus had tucked some away across the Crack, where few ventured.

"Ach, well, don't worry about that. I feel good today. The elves won't be bothering us again this year. At least it's not likely. Heh. I've got them locked in the Depot now. Give 'em a few weeks of hunger and thirst before I pay my final visit by there." Her face took on a brief

hunted look, but the other dwarf missed it as he reached under the bar and grabbed a small keg.

Der Kartoffel's eyes fixed on her and he smiled, slightly. "That's nice."

"Aye, it's a dangerous world out there. I hear tell our liason with the elves has been complaining that they haven't come to trade with us for some time now. Pity the elves never arrive to trade."

"Heh."

"Oh, before I forget, I'll be topside for a while keeping an eye on the works and the expansion for this place."

Der Kartoffel raised an eyebrow slightly. "We're expaning?"

"Aye, I had a great idea while I was laid up and I'm moving on it this summer. Best time for it. Of course, all the ice had to be carted out for the time being but if things go well it should be nice for us."

She drained her glass and gave a quick salute with two fingers to her brow before making her way up the stairs. The warm air of spring was making it's way down the staircase and sounds of construction could be heard, even this far down.

((RL writing is going ok ,but this is a nice creative break sometimes to write for fun. I'll try to keep this going better. So don't worry, it's not dead.))

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on May 03, 2010, 04:29:11 pm

The orthoclase door banged loudly behind her and Fre span around to catch and silence it before it did so again. Turning the heavy key in the lock she dropped it into the sand at her feet. No reason to give the enemy any advantage should she fall. The small hallway was narrow, but to her at the moment it felt far smaller than it, in reality, was. Her breathing began to pick up as she double checked her straps and gear.

Again.

In her mind she returned to the depths of Onol Lened, playing it over and over in her mind, just as it had been in her nightmares. Sealing the door behind them, knowing that what they were about to face could well kill them. Then she had had no idea what to expect but in her mind since her feverish imagination in her dreams had spawned countless horrors. Demons, and beasts and tentacle covered horrors. Beings of pure flame or pure shadow that could rend, burn or destroy flesh. In her dreams her companions fell before the abominations, a helpless few against a mighty onslaught of fury and she lay locked in her room sending bolt after bolt into a room that boiled with madness and evil, until at last she reached for more bolts and there were none. The booming on her door would begin then and she curled herself in a corner to await her inevitable defeat.

It had not been so in reality.

She knew that, but despite that knowledge she could not shake those terrible dreams, those hideous visions. She'd seen Paulus and Crush and ... that other dwarf, whatever his name was torn apart countless times and always woke before she too was torn asunder. Except once. Only once had she been unable to wake, gripped by a real fever after her terrible injuries at the hands of the Avar squad leader. She had lain in a feverish state, unable to wake, unable to scream. And unable to defend herself.

Her hands shook now as she pushed back those black thoughts and focused her mind on her task. She took a few deep steadying breaths before pulling out a second key and unlocking the door before her.

As she stepped into the trade depot hall the immediate scent of death and blood filled her nostrils, sharp and cloying. A single elf, Sethe Dunenation the ominous Barb was crouched, bathed in blood. He turned his frenzied gaze upon her and stood, throwing himself at her in a rage.

Almost she shrank back from this recreation of the scene from her nightmares. Almost she forgot herself, but her hammer raised and with one swift motion fell.

She looked around cautiously but nothing else stirred in the room full of death. Satisfied she returned to the hallway, calm again. She took another deep breath and scrabbled in the sand for the key once more, letting herself in to the rest of the fortress.

It was a simple matter to report the cleansing to Thesaurusaurus and let him know the depot was ready to be cleaned for trading during the summer and fall. Behind his stacks of vellum and the racks of small polished stones he looked like any typical harried clerk, but he nodded politely before she turned and left.

She hardly heard Lor's exultant cries of "They've got another large red-backed spider in a cage! Anyone know how to check if this thing's a boy or a girl?"

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on May 04, 2010, 06:37:50 pm

16th of Hematite Early Summer

It wasn't that Oddbodd was particularly charitable. Nor that he necessarily enjoyed going out of his way to help others. But he was certainly beginning to feel like he deserved both praises as he stumbled along outside in the bright sunshine. The weather was warm, not as warm as his forges and there was a cool breeze as well, but warm enough to make him sweat as he hurried over the slopes, a bucket in hand. He was moving quietly, lost in his thoughts. Such was often the case as he worked on how to properly create the mechanisms that could handle the torque his device would need. Time and time again he came back to the same material though, despite it simply not making sense to him.

Brass.

Malleable enough to be able to create almost whatever shape he would need, yet strong enough to handle the strain that the stone mechanisms could not, without shattering. What he really needed though was his own workshops. Proper space that could handle his needs. And magma of course. Ragnar had let him into her 'sanctum' and he'd soon seen that with the distance it had to travel to the general forge areas there was insufficient to power another workshop in a more secluded location.

The wheels of his mind turned and grumbled and then, suddenly all thoughts vanished in an instant.

"Ambush!"

The words had come out of his own throat and the pack of avar seemed equally surprised at his seemingly sudden appearance and scattered from what they assumed was a potentially deadly dwarf. They were mistaken in their assessment. Perhaps. But their reaction to scatter possibly saved Oddbodd's life. It likewise gave Fre enough time to gain the summit before the migratory mechanic realized that a spear-wielding avar was about to ride him down. He instinctively dodge and ran up the slope, making it harder for the aggressor to follow. Only as he neared the summit and he saw Fre running towards him at an oblique angle did he realize that the avar was right behind him again. He rolled to one side suddenly, dodging the tip of a heavy iron spear that nearly impaled him from behind. And then Fre was there, crashing into mount and rider. She sent the avar sprawling and Oddbodd, not cowardly, but merely untrained, lept for the creature. They thrashed about on the ground for what seemed like an eternity before the sturdy dwarf managed to get an elbow in and nearly broke the creature's jaw. The avar got a glazed look briefly as Oddbodd siezed it's arm, twisting it savagely. The pain must have brought the avar

around and it tried to scrabble for it's spear but the dwarf didn't relent until he heard a crack and he released the limp arm, now flopping around uselessly.

Still the avar put up considerable struggle and though it could never get it's weapon to bear one handed now, Oddbodd couldn't seem to gain further advantage either. The pair pummelled and bit and kicked and scratched at one another, inflicting minor injuries on the small ledge as the real battle seemingly moved on and forgot them. Some time later Paulus ran by as well shouting encouragement to the engineer before running swiftly by towards the valley on his east.

Both combatants were rapidly tiring and the avar was continually fading in and out of conciousness but by now the dwarf lacked the strength to capitalize on it and when Fre returned, who knew how much time later the sun was already beginning to set in the sky.

"Ach, lad. You'll never finish the job that way. See? The leg's already practically broken."

She brought her hammer down swiftly on the avar's windpipe, crushing it swiftly and the creature struggled for breath briefly before finally lying still. The exhausted engineer allowed himself to be hauled to his feet by Fre and his thoughts were anything but focused as she calmly led him back inside the fortress so he could rest and get a drink. He tried to protest but she gently shut him down.

"Don't worry about the bucket Oddbodd. I'll send someone after the bucket. Led may need the water but you need rest too. Besides, I hear Paulus is nearly finished with the well in the Accursed Crack. We've cleaned up most of the problems here, what few remain have fled to our borders to nurse their wounds."

Gratefully he let himself be led into the pub, set down at a table and blissfully he sat and drank his ale. Cool, refreshing and flavorful ale.

(Sorry Oddbodd, despite all your efforts you still didn't manage to get a kill. lol. You seriously wrestled that avar into a red mess, but dealt no fatal damage.)

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 05, 2010, 06:49:07 pm**

Early Fall Journal of Led, High Priest of Mondul

Life and death are two sides to one coin, and how they connect to each other is a paradox that few can grasp. Many would say they are opposites. Like heat and cold, light and darkness. But Glacies came up with a very interesting observation the other day about this. She's tasked herself with discovering the purpose of death as part of her training as priestess of Mondul. Her observations included that while we live we must eat and also while we live we remain warm. It's as if our bodies keep themselves at a proper temperature so that we can function. She spends all times of day and all weathers out on the walls of Mondul's temple. From the black of night in the dead of winter to the noonday heat of midsummer's day.

She has done excellent work on the walls, as well as organizing the other masons and consulting with Paulus over the design. But when we spoke last I put the question to her. It is a good question, that of how life and death are connected. Few in our little flock could have provided such an insightful response to the comparison between life and death and hot and cold. I believe her words were

"That, dear chap, is a whole heap of slag. Life and death are nothing like hot and cold. Hot and cold are opposites if I've ever seen them. You cannot have them at the same time. Either it is hot, or it is cold, but there is also in between. If I'm warm and spend too long outside in winter I get cold just like everything else. So there are degrees of hot and cold. Light and dark are the same. If you have a sealed room it is dark by the sheer absence of light. With light you have likewise varying degrees. But life and death... you are either alive, or you are not alive."

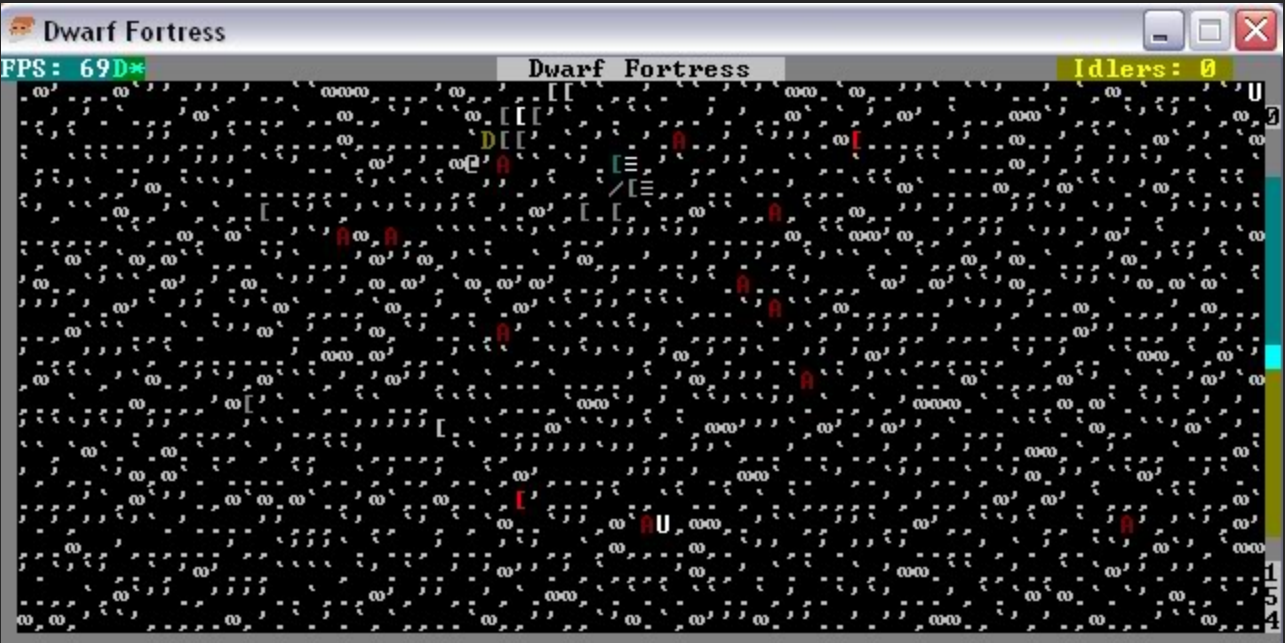
It was very interesting once you truly begin thinking about it. Cold is simply the absence of heat. Darkness is the absence of light. But death and dying is not the absence of life, necessarily. There are parts of us that continue on, that are, as it were, immortal. Not immortal like the elves, but as far as I can tell, untoucheable by mortal means. Our spirits are what I refer to. That which gives us the spark of life when united with our bodies. Death occurs when the body can no longer sustain life and the spirit departs the body, but that spirit does not die.

Of course, I do not refer to that abomination which is the undead. They are not alive and no foul magicks can bring them fully so. Where our spirits go and what happens after this life is what I've been pondering on while I work, now that I'm whole again. Bedrest is useful for thinking, but work clears the mind better than perpetually lying around. Perhaps that is why I drive the others so hard to work. That they may gain the vision of life through work. Or rather, of the significance of death as an integral part of life. I almost pity the elves. To be undying inherently must give them a terribly altered perspective of life. We shall do our part to bring them to an understanding. Paulus and Fre are surprisingly ... zealous of this concept. I would have expected more difficulty with them, but with our official policy being to sieze the caravan goods as part of the 'repatriation' program that King Tosid has instituted we only take it a small step farther.

I was concerned initially that bring death to the elves might be a mistake. What if they didn't truly have souls at all? But Mondul has enlightened my mind. Where there is life, there is spirit. Where there is spirit and body must also come death.

I digress now though, my intent in writing was also to clarify the events of these last few months that I've been laid up. I have precious little time as there is a vast amount of workable material with which to praise our goddess. I shall do my part in preparing for the formal consecration of our temple.

Work has progressed well. Glacies and her crews, despite some delays have progressed well and are preparing to begin capping the thing off. The pate or dome may well require a slightly different construction technique but I'm sure they can handle it. The other clan members have been busy working towards Fre's project and I heartily approve of it. Life outside had grown increasingly dangerous and I do not forsee it getting any better. Just last week the dwarven caravan arrived. We'd seen some activity to our north already and knew of two avar patrols in that region.



Imagine the trader's surprise when they begin heading across the bluff to find nearly sixty armed and armored avar and the same number of unicorns as mounts camped out. They managed to break through, though from what I hear they suffered the loss of a guard.



The masons up on the walls apparently got a good view of the action and were able to report. I was surprised the traders made it at all but apparently they had news to deliver as well, by order of the King himself. The head merchant was pleased to have shelter for their stay, particularly underground. So many outposts had cropped up that left their trading structures outside and unprotected. In any case it seems that our 'settlement tax' had been paid "by Lord Fahlstrom himself" out of Onol Lened's coffers. Imagine my surprise! Also, it seems that our settlement has been downgraded back to an outpost due to the report he submitted on us last year. We have numbered less than twenty for some time now. And according to him, our continued success in the face of 'siege conditions' that he himself had personally witnessed would ensure that we remain on the trade routes.

What I think he really meant is that they'd be more than happy to cart away all the odds and ends our foes bring with them. Which of course we obliged them with. In exchange for as much steel as they would give us.

Despite lightening their loads considerably, particularly since they didn't have to haul out all the metal for our 'tax', one of the merchants didn't leave our little valley. They lost him as they broke through the now somewhat scattered ranks of avar once more.

So, despite all that has happened it has been a very peaceful year so far and we've gotten much accomplished. With any luck we shall finish off the Temple exterior in time to dedicate the structure properly to Mondul at the end of next year. I can only hope all goes well.

24th of Moonstone (footnote)

Heh. Glacies called me up to the walls to watch the sight. The small army of avar to our north were being scattered all over the mountainside by a zombie Giant eagle who seems to have picked them out as a tasty morsel. Unfortunately the avar were to quick and the eagle never got any of them but it was still amusing to watch. I would have loved to see a unicorn carried aloft but no such luck apparently.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Frelock** on **May 06, 2010, 07:06:11 pm**

Good to see you back in action, Paulus. Your work is excellent as ever. I love the depth you give to characters, especially Fre (eh, so I'm selfish). I'm curious, you planning on anything special for the two-year mark?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 07, 2010, 11:38:54 am**

((Thanks for the comments Fre. Considering you're now an elite soldier and I can't put you on civvie duties I'm afraid you get a disproportionate share of the action, combat wise.

And yes, I'm hoping to have some good images for the two year mark. Probably either a 3D or dwarf visualizer if I can get them to function for me. I've never used either so we'll see. But I should hopefully have the Temple of Mondul completed by then so it should make for a nice image. In addition to the normal posts.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 10, 2010, 03:38:07 pm**

24th of Granite, 16

Morul shivered as a blast of frigid air hit her face as soon as she opened the door of the main stairwell. The winter's chill hadn't slackened in the least just because it was supposed to be springtime. The wind howled past her as she crossed the icy span of stone bridging the ramp and their fortress and not disconcertingly her foot slipped in the very instant she had risked a glance to one side and down the ramp. She froze for just a second and caught herself before her slip became worse. In that fleeting instant she was able to gaze down at the masonry workshops at the base of their temple.

They were in full swing, her fellow masons busy chipping out stone blocks for use in the temple. Not a single unsmoothed stone had gone into it's construction, a testament to their dedication as well as their goddess. But there were fewer workshops than masons, despite having eight down there, protected by the worst of the weather by the temple hanging over their very heads and by the massive stone walls of the quarry. Not that it still wasn't cold outside, but Glacies, who lately didn't seem to feel the cold at all, insisted that they get used to it. She claimed it cleared the mind and focused the inner senses. Nearly half of the masons devoutly believed her as well, though Morul could see little benefit to it, she just wasn't given to serious reflection. But it did ensure that production increased. The only way to keep warm was to keep moving.

The ramp itself had been hatched to prevent slippage and the winds buffeted it so thoroughly that it remained snow free but still the going was treacherous. With all her thoughts focused on her own descent she didn't notice the creature that suddenly appeared out of the swirling snowstorm until it was too late.

The goblin, for his part, was equally supriised but it was he that was the invader and his preparations served him well at this time. Before the dwarf could do more than shout "Thief!" his dagger had already been drawn. The dwarf attempted to flee his presence, and truth be told he sought the same but there was a mix up of directions for a brief second where he realized that he was fleeing in the opposite direction as she and that was leading him deeper into the dwarven fortress. A second shout from behind him sounded.

"Ambush!"

He would be trapped and as he turned again to flee in the opposite direction the dwarf, that had the same thought as he crashed into him in a tangle of arms and legs. They bit and tumbled on the ramp and he managed to score a very decisive blow, sinking his dagger into the dwarf's chest before suddenly an awful sinking feeling came over him and the wind was rushing by him. A second later the two, still entangled, struck the ground below with a sickening crunch. The dwarf, fortunately for him, had cushioned his fall. She was still breathing, but only barely and little flecks of blood were coming out of her lips as she coughed. He rolled off of her, desperate now for escape. His own legs had been injured and as he drug himself through the snow he was grateful that the armored goblin patrol he'd led to

this place had likely distracted the lone guard at the bottom of the ramp.

Had he known that that particular guard was armored and well trained he might have reassessed his opinion. His ignorance spelled his own doom though, since as he was coming around the corner of the lake he heard the soft crunching of snow behind him.

"Well, well. What have we here? Another little rat trying to get away!"

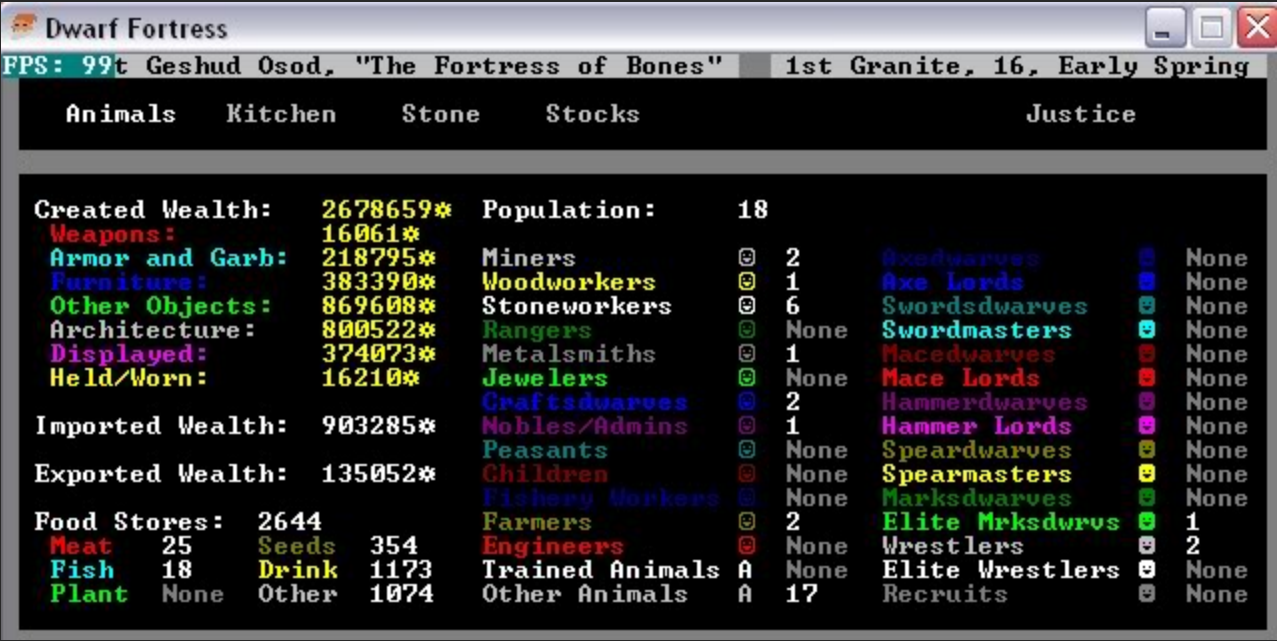
The words were in dwarven but he knew it well enough to interpret them and he knew he would not escape the dwarves' wrath. He had barely managed to turn and face his foe when the glint of her steel warhammer above his face warned him to move. His leg would not respond fast enough though and with a sickening crunch the blow smashed into his left shoulder, driving through bone and flesh and slammed him to the ground. By the time the second and last blow landed he had already blacked out.



(Morul bled to death before help arrived to take her to bed. Led buried her in a tomb that had already been prepared in the Accursed Crack. 7 goblins (2 thieves and an ambush patrol) were killed in the making of this post. None of them suffered long. Fre and Paulus saw to that.)

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 11, 2010, 09:46:07 pm**

((For those of you that like statistical reports and stuff. Technically this predates the death of Morul as mentioned above.))



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 12, 2010, 05:37:09 pm**

26th of Slate Mid-spring year 16

Reg was first to crest the hill and get a look at her new home. It lay to the north and the massive stone structure could be seen even through the lightly drifting snow. The others had decided to wait and not come for the time being and though she wasn't happy with their decision, she understood. Nearly a third of them had either been spontaneously assigned to a military patrol for the month, or incarcerated for failure to comply with a mandate. Granted, they were also cultists, followers of a goddess of Death.

Of course, they were also members of her clan. The Fahlstrom clan. Which meant that even though their system of worship was different she could at least respect them for their affiliation. Her own parents had been one of the many shipped to Onol Lened as intended work crew to strip the place bare, but while there she'd learned much from the people. And she'd met personally with the Lady and lord of the fortress. Many of the other dwarves had told her family of the stories of Kilrudmorul, and of Dorenemal. And it seemed to her, that this Lady and lord were of a different sort. They saw to their own and though the fortress was being stripped of it's wealth to allay their national debt, much of that wealth saw it's way into the fortress coffers as well. The caravans could only take so much metal at once and their rate of production far outstripped available transport. In order to help fuel expansion Lady Fahlstrom had agreed to fund expeditions to establish new outposts in the clan name, as well as offered to pay their share of the new taxation. Many took them up on this offer.

Her parents had been in a group that decided to reinforce one of those settlements and that had left her independant of family. She'd been suddenly taken by a desire to travel and see all these places and with the remaining income left to her she hired a mercenary, a clanless dwarf of the other eastern nation, and purchased supplies. Geshud Osod was the last place to visit and while in Shellhelms she'd come across a group of clan members preparing to go there. She helped organize them but set out on her own, with her 'guard' when they were delayed.

Masenik now had finally arrived at the hill as well and surveyed the sight. To be honest, he didn't know why he still accompanied Reg. She'd paid him well enough, but their combined funds had long since been depleted in their travels. He'd even had to sell his sword to buy food at Shellhelms and the thought still irked him. He liked everything in it's proper place, and the empty spot on his side where his weapon had rested reminded him that all was not as it should be. And those thoughts led him back further still to his past home. He yanked himself back to the present.

Best to get a move on. He'd seen strange beasts roaming these hills.

(Masenik, here's your character sheet.)
[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **masam** on **May 12, 2010, 06:45:43 pm**

That is exactly how I thought of him. Excellent work!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **May 14, 2010, 01:07:22 pm**

16th of Hematite Early summer

The early morning light glinted off the northern field, but even despite that, movement was visible to the north-east of the large tower. There was almost perpetual construction on the top levels now and the vantage a hundred foot tower provided was expansive.

"Humans!" Glacies called down the currently hollow structure.

"And it looks like they've brought wagons lassies! Inform Led and Thesaurusaurus please."

One of the workers at the bottom of the walls made for the stairwell and soon the word was passed along. Shortly thereafter a quick break from construction was ordered and the Trade depot cleaned up from the recent ... elvish incident. The goods were neatly gathered in and collected into the depot in largish piles and bins of trade goods were brought, all the while Thesaurusaurus took notes and stock records, muttering to himself.

Ellum Adohtogi, the human liason was the first to arrive with his expansive white teeth providing a rich contrast to his darkened smooth skin.

"Greetings to you my friends."

Led greeted him cordially and soon the pair had moved on into the fortress towards Led's platinum workshop and the boneyards.

The high priest considered it a perfect place to conduct a meeting, there amid the bones of the fallen foes of the fortress.

Hashing out the details of a trade agreement took some time, and by then the wagons had already made their way to the depot and finished off loading the goods. Not that they had much useful for a group of independant dwarves. A few metal bars, including some wonderfully lustrous black bronze that glistened in the flickering lamp light of the depot. Some iron as well. Plenty of booze, for even the humans knew the dwarves were fond of booze. But other things were less useful. Large articles of clothing and armor, inferior iron weapons. Cages of common animals and stacks of cloth were also in abundance. Boink herself took care of the trading and purchased the useful items, the metal mostly, and the alcohol for diversity, as well as some of the fresh meat. The humans were willing to exchange it for the elvish made goods and clothing, in addition to the crafts, instruments and goods that Lor, the expert crafter had produced. Even a large selection of well carved totems (from domestic animals only of course, totems of their enemies were kept for religious purposes) made it onto the wagon with a single pair of Masterfully carved unicorn totems being gifted to the humans as a present.

Led shook hands with the tall human diplomat. "It's a pleasure doing business with you. Care for a quick drink before you go?"

The human looked suddenly wary but nodded politely. "Lead on then, friend."

Led nodded and led him to a door leading out over the Accursed crack itself. The span that led across the crack was wide enough, perhaps ten feet or so, but the darkness beneath it was immense and the human felt himself swallowing and trying to focus ahead. Fortunately it was a short bridge. The dining hall opposite was small and had only a few tables and chairs in it, but Led knew that the drink was good here. Only Paulus sat in a chair downing the remains of his smooth rum. He kicked the rest of it back with a wince when he saw the pair entering.

"Ah, sorry Led. Thought I'd be alone here. I'll be on my way."

"Don't worry about it. Paulus, meet Ellum Adohtogi. Ellum, meet Paulus Fahlstrom."

The human raised an eyebrow as the dwarf came over to shake his hand. Paulus' armor was solid and deeply decorated with bones of various sorts. The greaves and gauntlets had been superbly decorated with scenes and images in cave swallowman bone, the plate itself studded with large gremlin bone spikes and adorned with a few hanging rings of goblin bone. The overall effect was one that almost made

the dwarf appear as one undead as well, had he not already removed his helmet, a large gravehound bone helm, well crafted and fronted with a scene of dwarf striking down an avar, in avar bone.

"Pleased." When the human gripped his hand he turned it slightly to look at the ring on his hand and he held it there for just a second as he caught sight of the silvery white engraved metal band. His eyebrow raised further but before he could ask Led interrupted him.

"So how's work here in the crack?"

Paulus turned to him with a slight smile. "Not bad. I think I've cleansed the southern reaches of the Crack altogether and the way is clear to the lake. I've only gotten about a half league to the north though and the rest will take some doing."

Led turned to Ellum with a smile. "It's a beautiful geologic site but we found the entire thing terribly infested with undead. Purging the abominations has been a long task."

"Truly. I have no doubt you could turn this into a place of beauty. How far down does it go?"

Led shrugged as Paulus excused himself. "We're not rightly sure. We've gone down as far as we dare safely go, but it goes much further still. Perhaps as far as the molten center of the earth, perhaps not. The air becomes bad if you go too far down."

"Ah. I see. Well, it seems like a nice little crack in the earth and a few undead shouldn't be a problem for such stout dwarves."

Led chuckled politely but thought it wiser not to correct the man.

Little and nice were not words generally applied to the Accursed Crack.

"Speaking of, why have you not come these past few years? We've seen neither hide nor hair of humans for some time?"

"Ahem, well... relations between our nations have been somewhat strained of late due to, frankly, your incurred debt. Us humans have set up many kingdoms and sometimes even city states that are goverened by the law-givers, as you likely know. The Merchant princes hold as much power, if not more though, and it is they that have assumed the bulk of your burden. Our own nation you have finally managed to pay off, but there are a half dozen more that are not at all happy with the state of your ... country's finances. That's not counting the debt owed to the Merchant lord Tariff Gladesighted. It seems he has agreed to purchase much of your debt off of the other lords.

It seems to me you dwarves have been holding back some. Even here I saw piles of silks and weapons and armor that would do much to repay your debt simply lying outside in the weather. We would gladly take them off your hands for you, in exchange for a small percentage, and use the rest to help with your debts."

"Aye, well, to be honest, we lack the dwarfpower, or in your case, manpower to collect all the rubbish from the many battles we've seen. This is a harsh place and too much time spent out of doors is that much more time for your enemies to sink a shaft into your back. Besides, our national debt is no concern of mine."

Ellum shook his head ever so slightly as Led led him back out and to the depot where the other merchants were trading. So softly that the dwarf couldn't hear the man whispered to himself. "Oh, but it is. You simply don't realize how much it is."

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 09, 2010, 03:23:06 pm**

15th of Limestone Fall of 16 Journal of the High Priest

The merchant caravan was much better this year and had little difficulty reaching the Fortress of Bones. Despite the two full patrols of Avar on the hillsides north of their destination. Their wagons clattered across the uneven surface of the upper plateau before heading down the short but steep slope into the lower valley. That descent was perhaps the most dangerous thing they'd encountered this year as an expectant hush filled the air around them. Many of the more seasoned soldiers fingered their weapons idly, as if concerned but finding no problems they remained sheathed.

The ramp itself looked remarkably clean and by the appearance of so many dwarves grabbing things from the small mounds of goods left from battle the guards guessed that they'd recently seen action. To a casual observer it might have seemed stranded that neither side greeted each other in passing, that the dwarves of the fortress extend a hand of welcome to the caravaneers. But a palpable tension hung in the air. A trained observer would have noted as well that many of the fortress dwarves looked a tad greenish simply from being outside in the bright fall sun and would correctly guess that the outer regions were, simply stated, unsafe. And they would be correct. In fact most of the cultitsts weren't particularly happy about being asked to haul gear inside for the traders to take away in the first place, much less be outside in sun, which only made the required tasks that much more onerous.

The caravan cheerlessly arrived at the Depot and were greeted by an enthusiastic young dwarfess, Boink.

"I'll be in charge of trading again this year, so I'll give ye a bit to unpack while we finish getting the last of the stuff hauled in." She raised her voice a bit and commented around the leader to the guards and other drivers behind him, "And anyone wishin' fer a good drink can always head on down to the Bold Anvil. Fre informs me she's ready to give out some good hammerin's."

A few chuckles could be heard by the guards and their pace of work quickened just a little. Many of them had, of course, heard of Fre and her 'hospitality'. She'd practically been a legend back at Dorenemal and if nothing else hot food and good drink would be welcome.

"First round's on the House she says! But the good stuff won't last long."

Boink smiled as the clamor of unloading increased dramatically. No one wanted to be the last one down and to get the dregs of the barrel. The head merchant was staring at Boink, one eyebrow slightly raised as he re-evaluated his position somewhat. A small smile graced his face and even spread somewhat to his eyes.

"Shall we discuss our mutual needs then?"

Boink took him by the arm and nodded. "I know just the place. We can even get a good drink there in peace and quiet. I'm sure we can come to some agreements that will be mutually beneficial to us both."

"If it be Urdim's will."

Boink laughed lightly. "Oh, I'm sure it is. Urdim helps those who help themselves though, and I've some matters of His I wish to discuss with ye as well."

Trading went surprisingly well, with Boink in charge. Thesaurusaurus provided all the inventory information of course but Boink has a remarkable way of turning profit. We got a goodly number of metal bars and steel arms and armor in exchange for mostly avar equipment that we could not use. The goods were, by and large, undamaged even. And after consultation with the others, Thes., Paulus, Glacies and Fre we have decided to do our part to help pay down our debts. Our additional 'tax' had already been paid by the Onol Lened Fahlstroms but the merchants were happy to accept another ten bars of iron as an offering to the King. The merchants were eager to depart before the snows arrived and we could not manage more.



Let it not be said that the followers of Mondul don't pay their way!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 10, 2010, 10:32:18 pm**

24th of Timber, 16

The winter winds were beginning to blow in already from the north-west as Ragnar, her anurite spade slung over her shoulder as she headed down the ramp. With the cleaning of items at the base it had been decided to take the time to construct a road to prevent regrowth of the swamp. Kolok had cleared it already and Ragnar was busily working on digging out a series of ramps on the slope to their north. It was there the wagons always descended and removing the slope to ease the grade would make travel considerably easier for the merchants. Paulus had been busily designing and setting the foundations for the road. Granite blocks for the west road, Felsite blocks for the north road. They'd considered paving the streets in gold, but it would be ludicrous to do so at a time when their collective people were in debt up to their eyeballs.

She whistled a tune to herself as she descended, not another dwarf in sight. Fre was normally stationed at the base of the ramp nowadays, to keep an eye on the workers in her expansion as well as the road and clearing crew. To be honest, now was the perfect time of year to be out of doors. Cool enough but still good weather. Fall was her favorite time of year to be out in the weather and now that she was fully recovered from her recent injuries she was glad to be working again. There was just something soothing about carving stone and her spade tore through it almost as if it were sand.

A sound behind her alerted her and she shifted her footing, instinctively bringing her spade in front of her as she turned. A lone insectoid creature had just clambered up into her view. It hadn't been there a second ago, had it? The eight foot tall insect seems as flustered as she was but her combat instincts took over quickly. Before the creature could plant itself for a speedy flight she'd bashed it into the stone ramp, stunning it. A few quick chops dismembered the creature but before she could even wipe her hands another practically materialized on the ramp in front of her. The insectoid froze momentarily but Ragnar was now in full swing.

And swing she did. The spade came crashing into the creature from the side, severing a wing and cutting deep into the chitinous plates of an arm. Another blow knocked the creature off the ramp into the air as Ragnar called out towards the fortress proper.

"Thief!"

It's the blasted buggers again!"

She started cautiously down the ramp to check on the dislodged creature only to find, much to her surprise that it was being climbed by a large squad of mounted swordsavar!

"Ambush!"

With their upwards momentum disturbed by an angry shovel-wielding dwarf the group of mounts quickly descended into chaos as Ragnar tore into their midst with all the ferocity of a dragon, albeit without the fire. The stream of curses coming from her mouth might as well have been fire for all it seemed to scatter the avar and Ragnar was soon joined by Fre, who had already been on her way back from getting a drink, and Paulus, who had been setting road at the base of the ramp. The trio quickly dispatched the avar, slaying their leader and his mount before hunting down the rest. Four avar managed to slip away and it was decided to leave them once it was realized they were not returning to the area.

Interestingly, it was only a day later when the merchants left. The remains of the battle, if it could have been called that, were still in abundance and more than one guard had been heard muttering that they were glad it took so long to load everything up again. Had they been caught by the patrol on the ramps it could have been disastrous.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 28, 2010, 02:46:45 pm**

3rd of Felsite 17, Journal of Paulus Fahlstrom

It has been too long since I've taken the time to write. I wish I could say 'had' but such has never been the case here at Geshud Osod. The winter has been one of the hardest in recent memory. We had nearly thirty foot drifts at the base of the cliff and the ramp had to be cleared almost daily. Considering Fre, Ragnar and I were the ones using it the most that left most of it to Fre, who did her best not to complain too loudly.

Let's just say she managed to not start any avalanches.

Ragnar was busy cutting into the slope north of us to allow for easier passage for the wagons and I was busy working on road construction. It's not that someone else couldn't have done it. But, to be honest, I prefer it be us three out in the weather and exposed to ambushes and attacks. The other followers are probably better than the average dwarf when it comes to handling danger, if only because of the area and periodic rites of combat. But better than the average dwarf isn't enough if a pack of avar shows up, or, perhaps worse, a patrol of insectoids. The bugs are decidedly nasty in their single-minded determination to kill us. Perhaps I shall take the time here soon to see what I can learn about their motives, but even communication seems ... essentially impossible.

Despite the heavy winter snowfall it has been a mixed blessing. It's allowed us a significant reprieve from attacks. We've had all winter and spring to work in peace. To be honest I'm not even sure if the elves came this year. Not that it would have made any difference. Fre would have taken care of our little elf problem easily enough.

We did receive a migrant, strangely enough. Name of Onul, a woodcrafter/cutter that has now been paired up with Kolok as a backup tree

remover. She even came bundled up in lion skin clothing and carrying a steel axe with Onol Lened's mark on it. She apparently brought me a missive from my brother, Tarin as well. We've not heard from Scott since the crossing, and Tony perished to goblin raiders in the old country. But from Tarin's letter things in the south are faring well. Or as well as could be expected. The site continues to offer up more than it's fair share of riches and has apparently produced sizeable quantities of metals, and a large number of diamonds, this year alone. Not to mention the lesser gems. They've continued to consolidate their influence and his wife's family has now thrown all it's influence behind the pair as the rightful successors to their legacy. With the kids they've had now it's no surprise. Tarin is up to seven, with a pair of twins! One a boy the other a girl.

Tarin apparently wanted to know how things were going up here and if anything was needed. I'll have to send him a response with the fall caravan. Perhaps he can send some assistance, discreetly, to the cultists in Shellhelms to enable them to leave. I wonder why the other noble families fear their gathering to this place, but then I look at what we've accomplished with so few and am not truly surprised. I suspect they fear many things which would never come to pass, and others they suspect so little of they will undoubtedly wonder at how it could be possible.

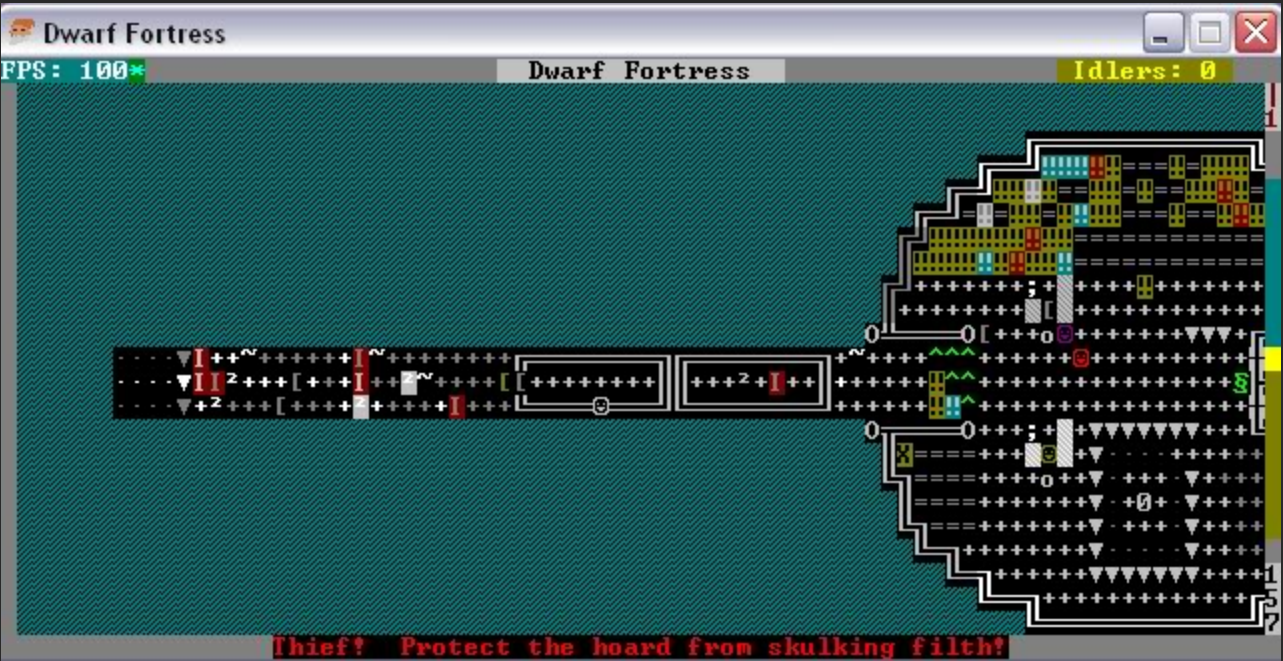
Work on Mondul's temple continues, though slowed by weather and other work. With luck it will be finished in a year. Likely no more than two, unless dire circumstances befall us.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 29, 2010, 11:14:02 am**

7th Galena, Journal of the High priest

It seems our period of relative peace has come to an end recently. The humans did not come this summer but in their place we've had a long string of attempted thievery. Around the 21st of Hematite Fre came across a thief as she was returning to her post. She began chasing the bug down the ramp when she came across another. And then another. Paulus and Ragnar went to help and they too encountered more on the ramp.

Like ants they seem to have formed a line leading towards what, I suspect, they believe to be a veritable sugar pot. Only today we had a similar string of occurances. Fully a dozen have tried to make their way in, only to be caught on the ramp. Boink took a sketch from the upper walls of the Temple and presented it to me for inclusion in our record.



Fortunately they were mostly trying to flee and no injuries, on our part, occurred. Still, Fre is somewhat paranoid, and rightfully so. It seems likely that there are more of them out there.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 30, 2010, 06:44:09 pm**

23rd of Limestone Autumn
Journal of Thesaurusaurus

I'd take more time to write but we've all been busy pushing to get the construction done. It doesn't look like this year now, unfortunately, but still, we're well along and are beginning to put the 'cap' on the dome. Mosus (his remaining son) told me about the action he saw from the upper constructions. Apparently as the dwarven caravan was pulling in a goblin ambush showed up at the base of the ramp.

Thank goodness Fre was there, but one of the little blighters was carrying a crossbow and nailed Fre in the leg, through armor and all as she advanced on him. The merchant guards were still a little ways away and the alarm was called, workers rushing to see what was going on, and run to join the fray if needed. Before the caravan guards can even cross half the distance Fre has the goblin hanging in pieces from the middle of a tree where he landed, broken limbs hanging awkwardly in the branches. The remaining goblins attacked and in a flash Fre's hammer found a mark, then another, and even a third before the guards could take two steps. In seconds almost the entire ambush was destroyed and the caravan guards just kind of stopped, looking dejected.

I think they relished having a little goblin sport. As they began climbing the ramp Fre yanked the bolt out of her leg and tossed it to the ground, spitting casually.

Her lilting voice carried up on the wind. "Fine sort of day, don't you lads think?"

Heh, I wish I could have seen the look on their faces. Anyhow, we traded the usual, but donated five bars of iron and five of gold this year to pay our 'tax'. The gold in particular should be well received and we'd have given more but there was no more room on the wagons.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 01, 2010, 05:29:25 pm**

2nd Opal Mid-winter

Mosus stamped his feet again to regain the circulation in them as he climbed up from the frozen pit. He looked up as he climbed at the vast towering structure over him and couldn't help but smile. The temple was nearing completion. Despite that they were working in the hole of a frozen lake doing who knew what installing tightly fitting glass blocks morticed with lead into an artificial glass floor for a lake. It didn't even connect to anything yet and was only a fanciful idea that Fre had had.

Not that he minded the lass. For a non-believer she was about as close as any could come to a follower of Mondul. Her tireless vigilance ensured that she saw a regular and steady amount of combat action that many of the younger generation yearned for.

He regained the surface, making his way towards the ramp along the used trail through the foot deep snow. The wind howled against the cliffs nearby muffling otherwise audible sounds and almost without notice he suddenly found himself being thrown to the ground, a heavy weight atop him. A searing pain on his back made him spin around and atop him sat a huge mandibled insect leering over him. It's chitinous body was pale, almost as pale as the snow and it's arms were flanked by two deadly looking blades made of chitin, one of which was stained bright red.

A brief thought raced through his mind. 'That's my blood. Strange, I thought it would be darker.'

The insect reared above him and he wriggled and twisted underneath it, trying to break free of it's grip. The blade slashed downwards again and a bright pain sprouted across his abdomen, and then another across his arm, deeper and more penetrating.

Thoughts again flashed in his mind. 'I'm going to die here.'

That thought sent shivers through his body and he determined then and there that it would not be without a fight.

"Ambush! The buggers are back!" he yelled as he grabbed a handful of snow and thrust it towards the head of the insect who reared back as the icy crystals struck it's face and eyes. That lapse was sufficient for him to wriggle free and he began shouting like mad at any within earshot. The insect shook it's head clear and took off in pursuit of him, though it didn't last long. The bug was incredibly fast and pounced on him again, taking him down by tripping him. He whirled before the insectoid could strike and began throwing punches as the two grappled in the snow that was gradually turning red.

Ragnar had heard the shout and cleared the corner of the ramp just in time to see the insectoid jump on Mosus after tripping him. With a fierce shout she raised her spade that she'd been clearing the cliffside with for the northern road and was about to charge when a motion in her peripheral vision brought her around. Another bug, sneaking up on her.

Seeing it's prey cognizant of it's presence the insectoid lashed out suddenly hoping for speed to succeed where stealth had failed. The dwarf was unarmored and should prove easy prey but when the creature struck the dwarf had already blocked her blow with it's gleaming weapon. She struck again with her other side, going down low and coming up underneath the dwarf's guard but in an instant the dwarf had repositioned itself against her and her swipe was futile. A sudden whirl of the spade was all the warning the creature had before it came scything in towards her and he moved to block it. Her chitin had stood up to dozens of blows, but this was no normal metal and it sheared through her arm as a knife through paper. Dully she backpedaled and the dwarf followed, raining blows upon her, severing her wings, and a leg a the joint, knocking her to the ground. A second later Ragnar stood over the decapitated insectiod, breathing heavily in the cold winter air, her breath steaming up in front of her.

Four more insectoids were making their way through the trees towards her now, their ghostly white figures making no sound in the snow despite their speed. She spared a brief glance towards Mosus and in that flash saw the insectoid plunge it's blade deep into the dwarf's leg and Ragnar knew she didn't have time to fight four and still save him. It was, perhaps, a foolish decision, but she made it nonetheless. With a shout she sprang into action, charging the insectoid atop Mosus and striking it from behind. The blow caught the creature in the wing, snapping it and cutting into an arm, wounding it badly. She took time with her second blow, sending it wide and catching the creature in the torso and sending it skidding off Mosus to land with a dull thump against a tree a dozen feet away. It's limbs were still trembling and she knew it was still alive. A glance down at Mosus told her he would not be able to run for it and grimly she whirled towards the advancing four, now only feet away and made her stand.

Mosus described the scene later with the clarity that only comes to those fully expecting their own death. The four quickly surrounded Ragnar, lashing out in pairs at the dwarf. A few managed minor hits as Ragnar did her best to parry their attacks at first. And then, as if realizing that they would only wear her down her tactic changed. She stopped parrying as a blow struck her from behind but she ignored the deep gash as she single-mindedly charged one of her opponents, stabbing out at it with her spade and knocking it to the ground. A rapid series of short stabs quickly reduced the bug to a torso with a few minor appendages but it had cost her. A half dozen wounds now bled freely onto the trampled snow around her and her breath came labored.

She whirled on a second and Mosus described it as an almost bezerker look came into her eyes as she utterly ignored any pain she must have been feeling. The second she struck down without pity and with a calm and ruthless efficiency that any weapon's master would envy but as she whirled on the third her leg gave way beneath her, unable to support her because of her injuries. The insectoids pounced on her thinking themselves victors but one was punched aside before it could even land as her powerful blow knocked it aside. The other had moved within striking range and even a prone dwarf could be a dangerous one. The insect lashed out at her and she caught it's blow with her arm, chitin sinking into flesh. But she twisted and soon had the creature in a lock, all but tearing it's arm out of the socket using her good leg as leverage.

Ragnar kicked it for good measure as the other insectoid charged again and she had a brief instant to grab the spade and bring it around, scything the creature's feet out from under it. An overhead blow stunned it long enough for her to drag it towards her and lean on it with her shovel, using her body weight to cut it slowly in half.

The last insectoid had, by this time, regained it's bearing and with the crazed abandoned of a wounded creature thrown itself at Ragnar's back, biting the dwarf in the arm while trying to tear at the tough flesh. Only when the creature beneath her was assuredly dead did Ragnar roll, crunching the insectoid beneath her frame. The move freed her from the creature's grip but cost her the shovel. Mosus was doing his best to drag himself over to help but the distance was too great for him to make speedy progress and the two, dwarf and insectoid were locked in a grapple to the death. The insectoid had many advantages over Ragnar, but strength was not one of them. Years now of working in the mines, and of combat and training had so conditioned her against minor inconveniences like pain, nausea and minor blood loss that her focus did not waver. Occasionally one would pass out briefly and it wasn't until Fre finally arrived as reinforcement that the creature was finally dispatched.



Both dwarves survived, Led carrying Mosus down amid the concerned ministrations of his father. Paulus retrieved Ragnar herself who only grunted as he came to pick her up and carry her to bed.

"Took ye bloody long enough. I kin barely feel ma feet in this snow."

Paulus smiled down at her and gently joked. "That's because ye have na' feet now, lass. Bugger must have bitten them clean off."

Ragnar chuckled gently until a spasm of pain crossed her face and she wriggled her toes just to prove a point to herself.

"Is the lad all right?"

"Yes. He'll survive I think. He's in better shape then you by the looks of it."

"Good. I got them all then?"

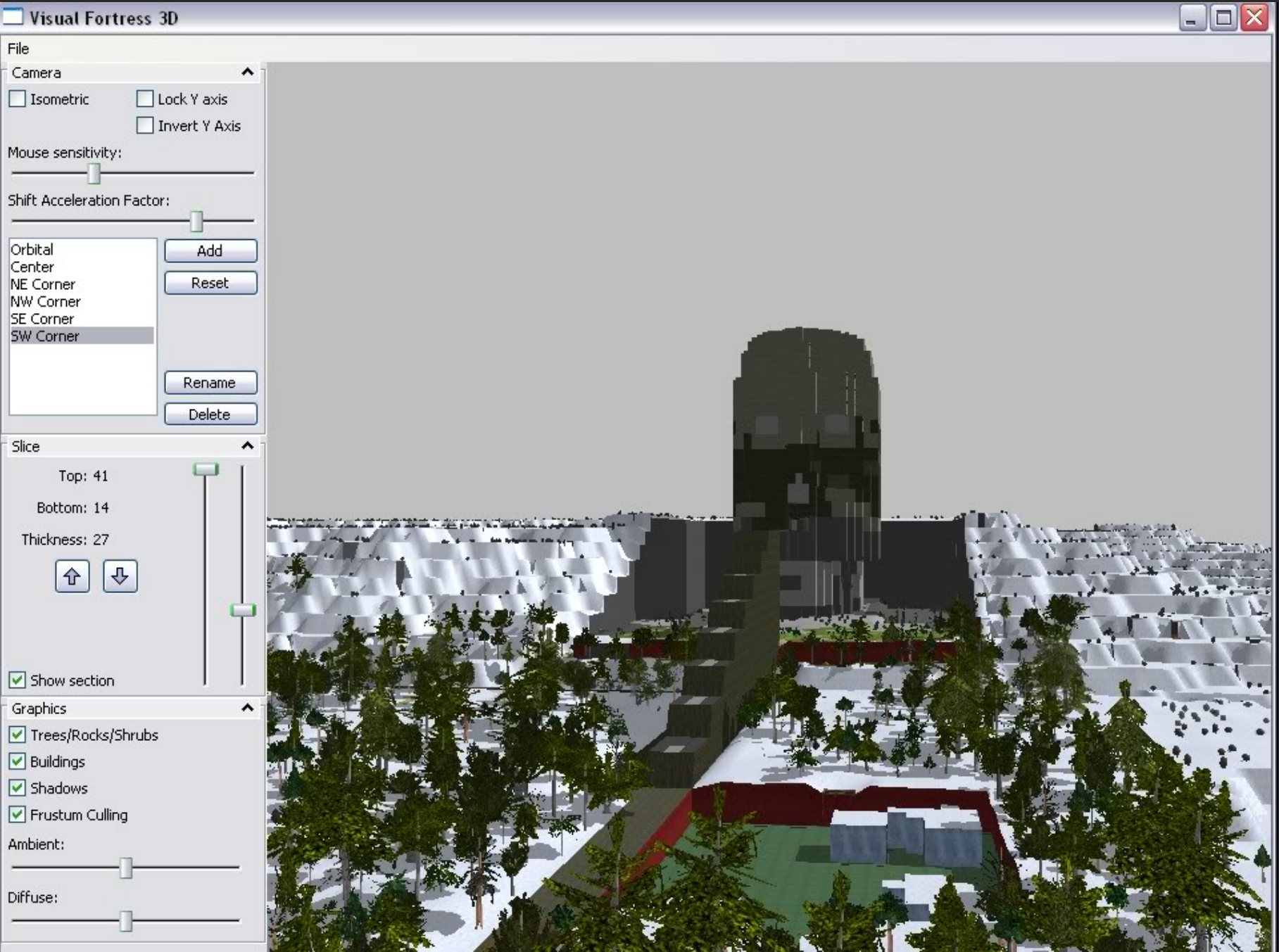
"Aye, every one. Or close enough to."

Ragnar did not respond and Paulus gently carried the unconcious dwarf down to the infirmary.

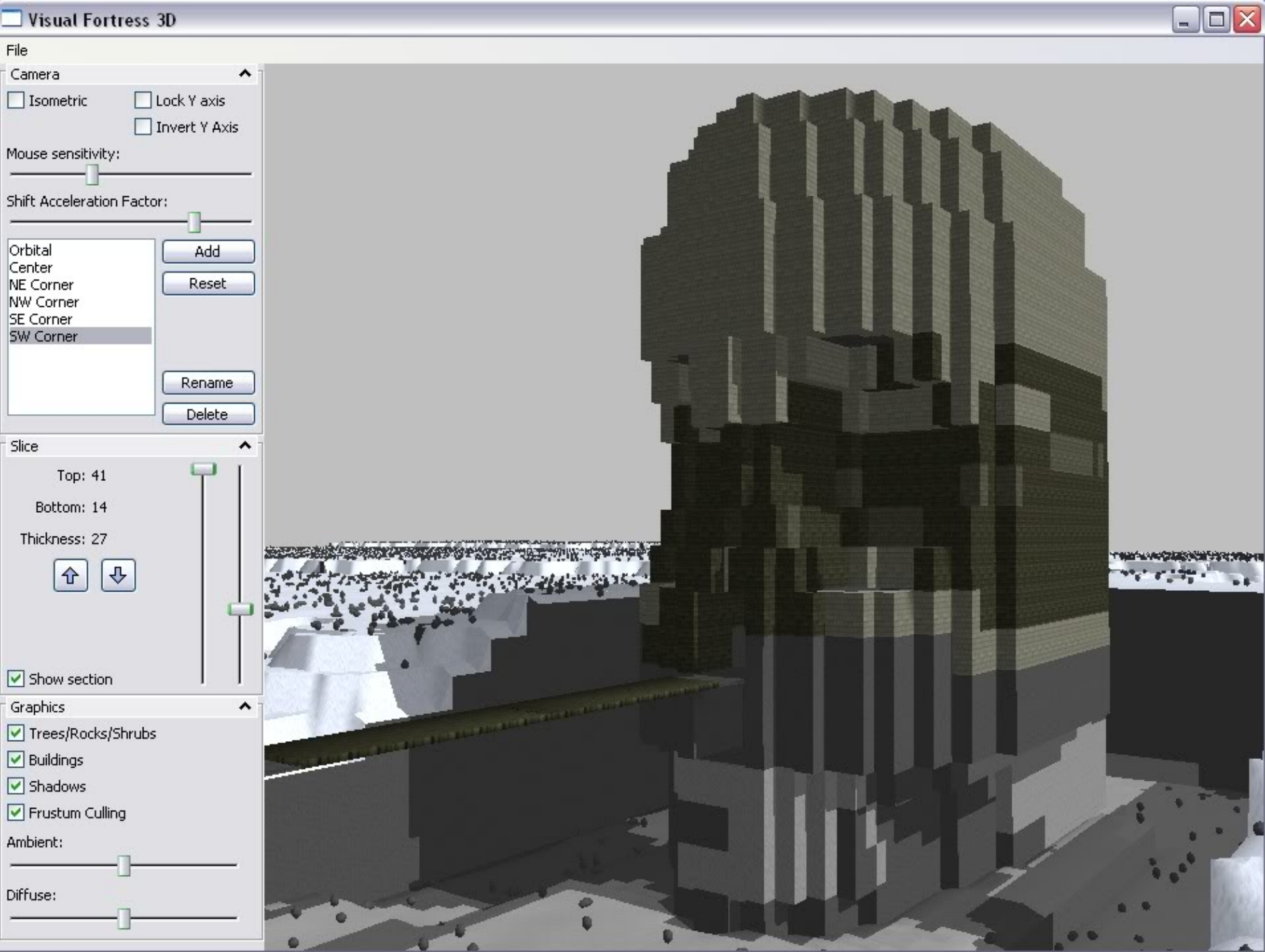
Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 01, 2010, 05:31:04 pm**

Ok...so, here's a little eye candy. Keep in mind that this fortress is in the entire embark zone. You may see a lot of landscape around it. That's because there is a lot of it. The main Skull fort is largely constructed out of the natural stone of the highest and only real peak on the map. The upper levels are built by hand. It's over 30 z levels from top to bottom. Because the natural stone is of varying material the colors are (regrettably) not uniform.

Oh, and the ramp enters the skull through the nose.

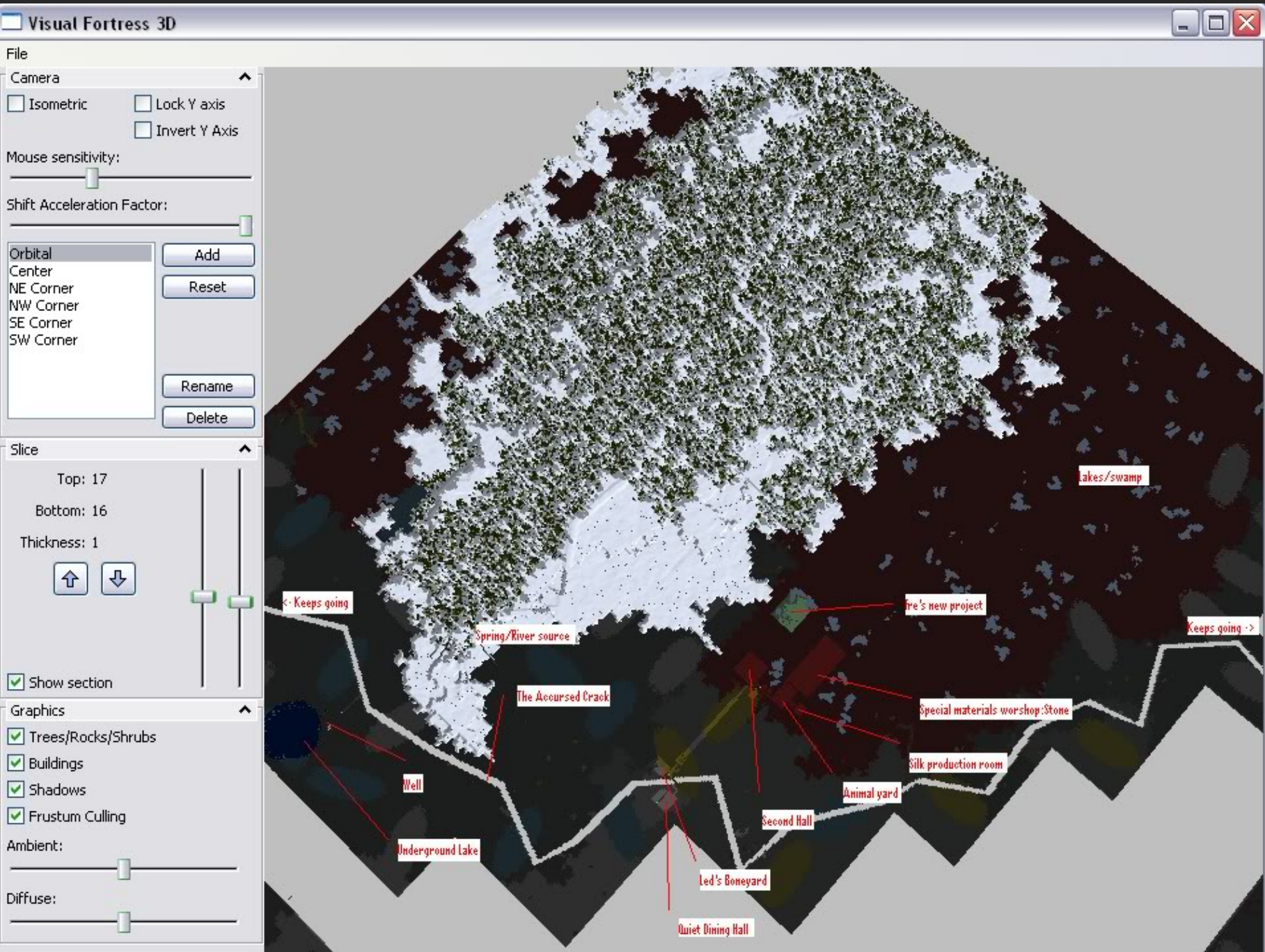


I think the side view is much better, despite the obviously blocky appearance.



In the frontal pic you can see the full ramp and Fre's pool in progress. It's winter and the natural lakes were left in place while I removed the stone around them. The floor was finished and now, come summer the water will melt and fill the pool again, in addition to added snow and rainfall. Come winter it'll refreeze so I can glass under the natural lakes so I don't have to refill it all manually. And I'll get some ice that way for Glacies to use building her hermit hole once she actually goes crazy. (oops, did I say that out loud... hmmm... should have spoiler'd it.)

The orbital view is actually quite refreshing and shows almost 60% of the map. Most of the Crack is on it and other points of interest at that z-level are shown.



So, thanks for all your views and interest. I do plan on continuing this until finished and with my near extermination of all breeding wildlife and removal of hundreds of chasm-critters my fps is around 40 on my good comp. So I'll be upping the population limit a little as soon as Mondul's Temple is dedicated.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **skaltum** on **July 12, 2010, 08:36:31 am**

bump 8)

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Battlecat** on **July 12, 2010, 10:29:12 am**

Very cool 3D shots of the area! I've quite enjoyed reading through your story to date!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 12, 2010, 04:38:07 pm**

(Thanks. I'm afraid everything looks cooler in my mind. ;) So... um... use your imagination. But I did model the thing based on an actual skull, despite it being blocky. And let me tell you... building a thing like that is a pain, particularly when you have a popcap set to 20.

I may have to check it out in other visualizer tools now that I've actually finished it. Kind of a shame that the inherent strata of the stone where it was carved out leads to the non-standard color look.)

Mid-summer-19 Journal of the High Priest

Again we've had a quiet winter. I do believe that Mondul is indeed watching over us and Glacies believes that we can finish the tower this year still. Everyone has been putting in extra time on it and even several of our clanmates have been helping. We've been working like mad on almost nothing but construction and we're now only a few hundred blocks from completion. Though I suppose our good fortune couldn't last.

The elves came in the spring but we'd shut down our trading hall by forbidding it's use and it seems the elves knew better than to try to come. They moped about a bit near the borders of our land before wandering off again.

The humans... were another matter. It brings to mind the conversation I had with their diplomat last year, though the group that arrived this year appears to be from a different tribe. Well, at least they seem like it from this distance.



We're not quite sure what to make of it since I ordered everyone to suit up but after a week or two of waiting around on pins and needles they haven't made any indication of advancing towards the fortress. We've not even sealed it off or anything and yet they just sit. Perhaps they're actually trying for a normal siege and hope to wait us out.

HAH!

We're dwarves. Like that'll happen. In order to not delay construction further we've decided to ignore them. We've enough food and drink to last five years or so, and that's without starting up the farms again. Paulus has been working on the roads again since some of them collapsed into the lakes at the mid-summer thaw. He's bridging them over and rebuilding the roads again, but other activities outside I've tried to curtail. Our two wounded are feeling better, which is good. I know it's uncharitable of me to think this way but they've been tying up resources to no end. Not only are there two less hands to do the work but the extra time it takes to fetch water from the well and to provide food for them has severely hampered other work.

(Not to mention that because of the distance half the time whoever goes to get water winds up filling a bucket and bringing it back 2/3 of the way before needing a drink themselves.)

Fre's pool has thawed and left a shallow pool across the whole surface. It doesn't seem to leak but we've had little rainfall this year and that may cause problems. We shall see what happens when it freezes again in a few weeks.

Well, back to work. I need to finish decorating the armor for the dedication should we be ready by years end.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 13, 2010, 12:40:26 pm**

Midwinter's day

A growing sense of uneasiness filled the prisoners of late. Perhaps it was the increased attention they had been receiving, the new additions of cages into their large room. More than likely though it was the ever so gradual decrease of natural sunlight that they had been receiving from above as the Temple of Mondul neared completion. The goblins in particular seemed distressed by this development and perhaps it was only they that understood the import of it. But the lizardmen had grown quiet of late, taking to hardly moving in the cold winter air. Even the tigermen had ceased their frantic pacing and sat, as if in meditation in their cages, only the tips of their tails twitching ever so slightly.

The light above them had shrunk to a small square, bisected in half and in half again leaving four small squares of light falling on only the central cages, those nearest the olivine pillar.

And then, even that disappeared as the dwarves industriously finished work on the temple a month and a half before the dying day of the year.

All of the routine in life then disappeared as even more cages were brought in and festooned in place, dwarves working anxiously to get them linked to levers in preparation for their intended ritual. The captives knew this day was coming. Except perhaps the insectoids, and no one truly knew what they thought or felt. The goblins did what they could to sharpen their weapons on the stones near their cages. All prisoners had been granted their equipment. None of it had been removed or taken away and they knew that if they were to be given a chance, it would come through conflict.

The lizardmen understood this perhaps more keenly than any. Unbeknownst to all but one of the inhabitants of the fortress they too were worshippers of a goddess of death. That lone dwarf was the one responsible for bringing them their food and had often had conversations with them, first in the halting common tongue, but as he learned their language, increasingly in their own speech, as far as he was able to

pronounce it. This was a pilgrimage or them, a way to prove themselves to their goddess and to prove that their own goddess was with them. It was clear, at least to them, that they had the most in common with these, warm-blooded creatures, these... dwarves. They would face death without fear, and deal death and murder where they could.

Few of the prisoners could sleep well for all the last few days of the year and as dwarves began appearing in the room clad in armor they knew the end was near. The armor itself was cunningly worked. Steel covered in bone. Breastplates inlaid with scenes of combat between dwarf and avar, in avar bone. Spikes of unicorns worked into helmets. Demon rat bone spikes fixed to shields. Whole sets of armor cunningly crafted so that the wearer looked almost, but not quite, like the skeleton of a creature. An elf here, avar there, pieces of goblin, troglodyte, unicorn skull helmets all masterfully inlaid and upon closer inspection scenes would unfold.

The creation of Tundrabrushes, the slaying of the elf merchant by a mule, the fatal wounding of a donkey by it's avar master and on down the line. Scenes of combat and death, images of moon, stars, mountains and gems. (Not to mention buckets and fish, of course.) All these were laid out in walking splendor before the eyes of the captives and some few of them could think to themselves: I was there when my brother in arms was slain, or when we ambushed that dwarf and killed them. I have seen those things with my own eyes and now I see them again, for the last time.

The dwarves moved slowly among the cages, milling about and admiring the workmanship of the scenes on each others armor in silence. The whole fortress seemed quiet as the sounds of masonry and stonecutting ceased, utterly and completely, for the first time in many years. The wind howling around the outside of the Temple of Mondul could be heard, but the masonry was superb and little draft could be felt. Torches had been placed alight in sconces set into the wall and by the flickering flame the remainder of the dwarves finally began to arrive.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 14, 2010, 08:29:12 pm**

As Led stepped through the doorway his steel low boots rang out loudly on the stone floor. His spear, shod in iron from it's sharpened tip down almost half the length of the heavy oak shaft. Not a word was spoken as he took his place near the eastern side of the room. A quick three thumps on the floor using the butt of his spear brought everyone around quickly as they approached to hear his words.

"Sisters and Brothers! We gather again in this newly finished structure at the dying of the year to remember. To remember the importance of death in our lives. It is death that gives our life meaning. Because of death are we able to live each day and without that sacrifice we would cease to be and perish ourselves.

But this is not a sermon. We've all worked long and hard to build a structure worthy of our goddess and now it stands before you.

Look around. Those of us have worked in it's construction have labored much while these others have worked against us and the glorification of Mondul. As life and death are in constant opposition so have we been. But as in life and death everything has it's cycle. Now that this structure is complete we take the turn to administer opposition to our foes! Let them feel the taste of our goddess and whisper prayers on their faltering lips! Let them know of the inevitability of this life and that all must return to death in their time! Let them feel the coldness of the grave!

These things are the domain of Mondul and with these acts we do her reverence!"

Led raised his arms in the air and proclaimed. "Mondul, in thy name and to thy honor we now dedicate this structure to thee. May thou watch over us and take us into they embrace as thou wouldst have it be, and let us administer thy sacraments to our enemies that they may learn after this life to feast on thy word.

Watch over our dead and living alike that we may walk the paths that return us to thy presence, we pray, and grant these, our enemies to learn wisdom at thy feet.

Accept of this our offerings which we give to thee, be it our lives or theirs and bless this, thine earthly abode!"

His hands dropped and the spear was thumped loudly and slowly on the floor once, and again, and yet a third time.

For a brief moment nothing happened and Led turned and shook his head slightly sighing in exasperation as the silence stretched onward. He looked around at the others and most were waiting in quiet anticipation. Except Sarah, who had fallen asleep during his speech.

Then the outer doors opened and Masenik came trotting in, looking somewhat apologetic.

"Sorry I'm late, hope I didn't miss anything. Fancied a bit of a kip down and the ol' Anvil."

A vein on Led's neck was beginning to stand out and his face was turning redder as Kolok only chuckled lightly. It was at this moment the first cages sprung open and chaos rapidly ensued as the prisoners were released.

((I've got this in video format since the battle is rather complicated. Unfortunately there were some problems with the levers. Heh. Darn unpredictable dwarves. So see for yourselves. And sorry Masenik, I strongly suspect that Led cursed you under his breath and that's the reason you were... well... see for yourself. But it was a goblin that did it, surprisingly enough.))

<http://mkv25.net/dfma/movie-2228-dedicationritualfortempleofmondul>

((The structure is complete but it's not full yet. The upper three levels will be for the sanctum, and there will be two arena style areas, the lowest dual tier one we use now, and a more complex arena above it for my zombie trolls, etc. That leaves somewhere between 6-10 full floors to decorate and describe as we see fit and I wanted to open it up for forum input. One will be a meeting room, and I have around 300 skull totems of high quality to decorate the floor with. ;D Yes, I'm going to have piles of skulls in the corner. It's decorative.

So, I'm accepting plans, designs, and/or input for what to do with the other space. Feel free to post designs if you want and depending on the response I'll see it done. We have access to 'most' materials. No adamantine of course. Not yet, though it's out there somewhere since I'm on the entire map of a hilly region. Each floor is roughly 25x25 room though some of these floors contain the eye sockets of the Skull temple and are a little smaller. Can't go any higher since the top of the temple is at the uppermost z-level.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **masam** on **August 14, 2010, 04:39:10 am**

dude...he got shredded...

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 14, 2010, 12:53:05 pm**

((Yeah... I'm afraid so. Going back through the movie I can only determine that it was a goblin Master thief that did you in. Hit you hard enough to send you flying even. Never would have thought that a goblin thief would have that kind of power in 'em.

Anyways, sorry your guy got killed. Working on spiffing up your tomb now. You've been granted front row seats in the Accursed Crack for as long as you want. ;)

I'll probably post again in a bit but things have been very busy. I defend in five days.

Whew.

Of course, then I have to still find a job...))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **masam** on **August 17, 2010, 02:12:05 am**

It's cool. I'll just search contemplate a dwarf for the next time you allow us to enter the hallowed halls of the clan

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 08, 2010, 01:28:43 pm**

(Whew, it's been a few very busy weeks and things have quieted down now, though I wish they hadn't. Funny how as soon as you finish school and all that goes with it you suddenly realize that unless you find a job you're technically unemployed. So, if anyone know of a Chemist position feel free to IM me. ;)

As far as allowing you another go Masam, feel free to request another dwarf. Just provide the pertinent background info and I'll see what I can do. I'm about a year (game time) behind in the writing that I hope to catch up and I'll be relaxing the population limits since progress is ongoing in clearing the Crack of undead. That goes for anyone of course, if you want another dwarf or whatnot, feel free to post. Please include name, preferred characteristics (and I'll see what I can do), and any background story you want. Keep in mind my story here isn't designed to be short-term. I'm planning on playing this fort for decades more and have plenty of time to develop your characters. You want to be an insane madman? Sure... but don't expect it to happen overnight. And of course I try to avoid savescumming so there's always a high chance you may die... a very high chance actually. Oh, and please specify if you want to be a cultist, a clan loyalist, a royal house loyalist or something else. (No I don't use Dwarf companion or any other outside programs... so I am not accepting elves.)

Year 19 Records of the fortress in the hand of Thesaurusaurus

End of spring-

The humans sieging us have finally left us, with no combat initiated from either party. Perhaps the few groups of undead that attacked them blunted their appetite for our riches. Or perhaps they left to go seek reinforcements. Either way, we've been busy cleaning up after the dedication of the Temple of Mondul and planning ongoing work in it. Even though the structure is dedicated the inner aspects of it require considerable work yet.

The arena/combat rooms at the base are obviously operational but Led has mentioned the Altar room that is to be organized on the top of the structure. Some of it is completed and it has balconies and upper causeways from which musicians can play instruments or sing or even just watch the sacrifices as desired.

As always, the work proceeds slowly, as we are simply too few for such a monumental undertaking, but we shall persevere, Mondul willing.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 09, 2010, 04:21:55 pm**

21st of Hematite

The summer sun shone splendidly down on the steep hillside, the sky a clear vibrant blue streak above the dusty grey stone of the hills, unbroken except in one place. Where a stone skull, over twenty stories tall sat, impassive and ugly. A ramp led up into the massive structure from which, at a Giant Eagle's perspective, or more likely a Zombie Giant Eagle, knowing this particular mountain range, small figures worked mixed in with the shrubbery below.

Many of the small figures were busy working in small workshops outside at the base of the structure, workshops that were nearly buried in loose scree from months of cutting stone blocks. A relaxed conversation filled the air as they worked and talked. They'd had a calm winter, and an even calmer spring. Not only that but the remaining dwarves that had been injured had finished recovering from their wounds and were again sharing in the work. A shout could be heard from above them as they worked:

"Traders! Looks like humans!"

The dwarves looked up from their work and many of their expressions weren't terribly friendly. Human had besieged them for nearly half a year just the past few seasons. It seemed strange that more of their number would show up to trade less then two months after the others had left. Almost suspicious even.

Slowly the humans and their animals made their way towards the ramp, leading into the skull-fortress itself and Fre stood at the top of the ramp watching their progress. She was a little more open-minded towards humans, and had long since learned that they needed to be evaluated almost individually instead of as a people. No concept of racial pride. Or rather, a strangely focused concept, since they were forever believing that some humans were better or worse than others. As an outsider she had no such false illusions.

As the humans were just beginning to ascend the ramp Fre headed in to inform the others that they were, indeed, here to trade. Besides, she needed a drink. Had she stayed a moment longer she might have seen the movement in the marshes below as more than half a dozen insectoids burst from ambush and began making their way up the ramp.

The first trader they came upon was apparently oblivious to their presence until they were upon him. He was the straggler, his pony laden with an anvil or two and some other small goods, and they had just begun heading up the ramp, effectively leaving him with only a single route of exit. Towards the fortress. His screams were shrill enough as he panicked and began running up the ramp as the swarm of insectoids flew upon his slow beast of burden and quickly tore it apart, chitinous blades piercing it's torso from multiple directions.

The bugs relished the blood of their kill for a few moments before turning their attention onto their other prey, and they swiftly headed up the ramp, forming a small wall of wings and clicking exoskeletons as they rose. The other trader didn't even make it all the way up the ramp before he was caught from behind, yanked off his feet as a clawed arm shot out and grabbed at his leg. A split second later his scream was cut short as nearly iron-hard mandibles broke his neck from behind. The other human merchants, fearing a trap, began fleeing down the ramp, directly towards their aggressors. One of them was thrown bodily from the ramp and landed amid the workshops below, broken and still. The others met similarly permanent fates and even the human guards were ineffective against the vicious insectoids.

The bugs advanced into the fortress, smelling more food, their feet clacking on the polished stone surface.

One by one the floors opened up beneath them and swallowed them whole, and but seconds later the entire ambush force was gone and the entrance stood silent once more, blood dripping slowly from the twenty foot bridge span onto the sparse shrubs eighty feet below.

After the initial ambush the dwarves were put on alert and it wasn't truly a surprise when a second group of insectoids was spotted in the hills to the north-east, casually slaughtering undead mountain goats. They were close enough to potentially be a threat and when a third group was seen only a little to the north volunteers were called for. Fre, Kolok and Paulus were the first armed and armored at the top of

the ramp and when the fortress cat unwittingly uncovered a fourth ambush party at the base of the ramp next to Fre's empty pool another shout was sent down the stair to hurry the others along. The three dwarves charged across the bridge and down the ramp, chitin screeching against iron as the insectoids charged up. Momentum carried the dwarves through and one of the insectoids fell off the ramp, landing in a tangle in the shrubs below. Kolok charged after it as Paulus and Fre stood, nearly back to back against the remaining insectoids on the ramp. Fre had been singled out as the primary target apparently and periodic slashes kept her busy blocking blows with her steel shield and hammer.

Above them Draconius, Glacies, Ascubis and Der Kartoffel charged down the ramp shouting 'Monduuuuuuuuul' as they charged to help their companions.

A general melee broke out with Draconius and Ascubis fighting a single insectoid while Glacies wielded her obsidian sword with considerable cunning. Der Kartoffel was circling with an insectoid above and lunged with his sword almost in cadence with the creature.

A pair of insectoids now warily circled Fre, who stood nearly motionless as they evaluated their foe. One of them dashed in to swipe at her and at the last second she tipped her shield down and deflected it, following her motion with a sudden hammer strike that took the creature in the leg, whirling it around and sending it skidding down the ramp. She followed it down before it could regain it's bearing and a second blow shattered an arm, a third it's wing, crushing into it's upper torso as well. The insectoid was no fragile creature though and it brought it's other arm around to try and scythe her legs out from under her. She dodged backwards and brought her hammer down in an arc, crushing it's abdomen as a burst of searing pain shot through her own torso and sharp chitinous blade erupted from the front of her left lower chest, piercing through even her armor.

The pain was immense as she stared down at the chitin protruding from her body and dimly understood what had happened. Instinctively she rolled, carrying the insectoid impaling her to the ground with her and she elbowed it in the head as she did so, getting a grip on it's blade carrying shoulder in the process. The twisting in her torso nearly caused her to black out as she calmly ripped the insectoid's arm from it's socket and left it dangling behind her before beating the creature in beneath her to a pulp. She stood over the mangled form gasping for breath and looked numbly around her. The others had fared better, though Ascubis had been knocked off the ramp as well, though the fall was not long.

The insectoids were all unmoving as she ripped the chitinous blade from her back and promptly fell into blackness.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 17, 2010, 03:42:53 pm**

Led sat quietly in a chair in the boneyard thinking. It was one of his favorite places to think, if only because the perpetual stench of rotting flesh ensured that no one else disturbed his here. This was his office, his workshop and his personal sanctum. The piles of bones, skulls and rotting flesh only added to the decor.

What do you expect from a High priest of Mondul, a dwarven goddess of death?

Seriously?

If someone had walked in on him they might have thought he was on break, sitting on a smoothed obsidian chair, leaning back on two legs against his workshop built of solid platinum blocks. But as he sat and thought ideas came to him, as if whispered from on high. The upper altar room, the High fane of the temple, would have a series of statues depicting the four bringers of death: Pestilence, Famine, War and Time. In their center would be a block altar for rituals and offerings, made of red stone, realgar most likely. The floor would be decorated in alternating and opposite hues, reflecting the struggle between life and death. And of course, it would be the repository for the Masterwork skull totems he'd been working on since his arrival in this place, symbolizing the inevitable victory of death over the living.

Yes, the image consolidated in his thoughts and the plan formed in his mind. It would have to be sanctified and made a holy place. Thereafter only the worthy believers would be allowed to enter it. Though a lesser room for rituals and teaching would be beneath it, spacious and large, sufficient for instruction and oration and ornately furnished to dispay the contrast between this holy place and their own, reasonable spartan living places.

That too would have to be remedied sooner or later, he thought, and if more believers did indeed arrive it would need to be sooner. But word would be slow to reach them and if, as he strongly suspected, they were still being hampered in their desires to depart, it could yet be a while. Thinking of it made his veins pop a little at the injustice. If he were given the opportunity to express how he felt to the nobles just once it might make things simpler. And then he would be hammered to death for murder.

Not for the first time it occurred to him that such a course of action might be exactly what it took to convince the ruling nobles to lay off. On the other hand it also might be justification to round all the believers up and execute or banish them.

He sighed.

If it was Mondul's will it would be done as needed. But such was not his lot. Not yet.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 20, 2010, 12:44:50 pm**

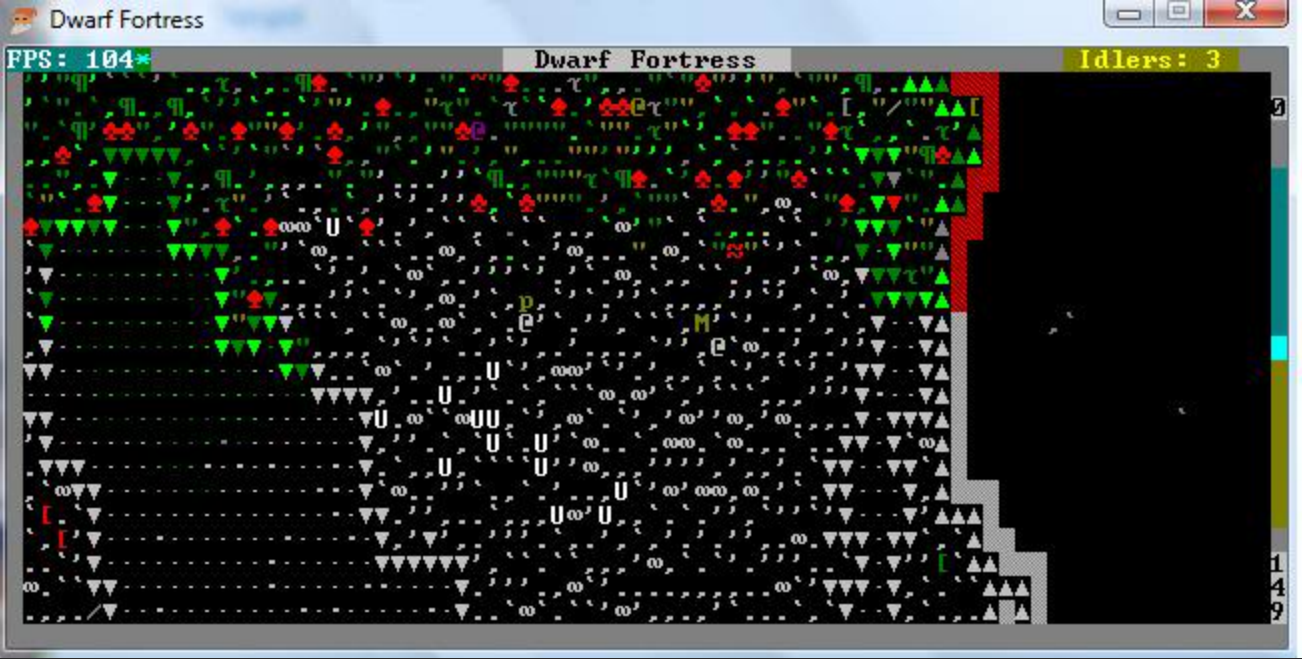
Late-Autumn year 19 Fortress log, in the hand of Thesaurusaurus

Caravans from Shellhelms have returned. The head merchant seemed awfully smug about something though there was no correspondence of any kind and they've refused to give me any information. Seemed awfully happy about our state of affairs here despite not being able to attempt to bleed us dry last year due to the siege. Maybe he was just happy about us being sieged.

Trading went well enough. We traded some of the more useless armor and weapons we've accumulated and that Led has decorated, along with totems from the domestic beasts for some basic supplies. A few metal bars, cut gems, food, drink, and steel goods and gear. And we sent another batch of gold bars as our 'tax' for the year. Managed to get around 10 bars on this time.

It's a shame to see it go, almost pains me. I know others feel the same.

Heh. At least life's not just conspiring against us and is making the buggers work for the goods they're carting away from here. As the caravans were leaving they were ambushed by two full patrols of Avar and unicorns.



Man-thing and beast brought the count up past 40 or so, though they didn't put up much fight. Caravan guards did their work well and not a merchant or wagon was lost, though two guards perished in the fighting. Erith was on hand to help as well, though the others were all busy. The Hound was in the Crack, Led was busy in his workshop and Ragnar and Fre were getting drinks. It was quick anyways and by the time the merchants broke free sixteen unicorns were dead, and eight avar, four mace and four axe. Two of the caravan guards had also died in the fighting and Erith offered our tombs to the dead.



We'll see them well buried, even if they weren't exactly friendly towards us.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 21, 2010, 03:17:05 pm**

(Previous post has been modified to include the images of the battle)

Early Winter, year 19

Her breath rose around her in a frosty cloud as she sat astride the unicorn that bore her. All around her the others, unicorn and avar alike stood steaming in the snow and brush. The ground was frozen solid already but the snow had not yet gotten deep and their travel had been relatively swift. Before them, ugly and grey stood the stone skull-keep of the defiled. The home of the fallen dwarves, who, they could only assume, had been turned by their foes of old. Or perhaps things much worse.

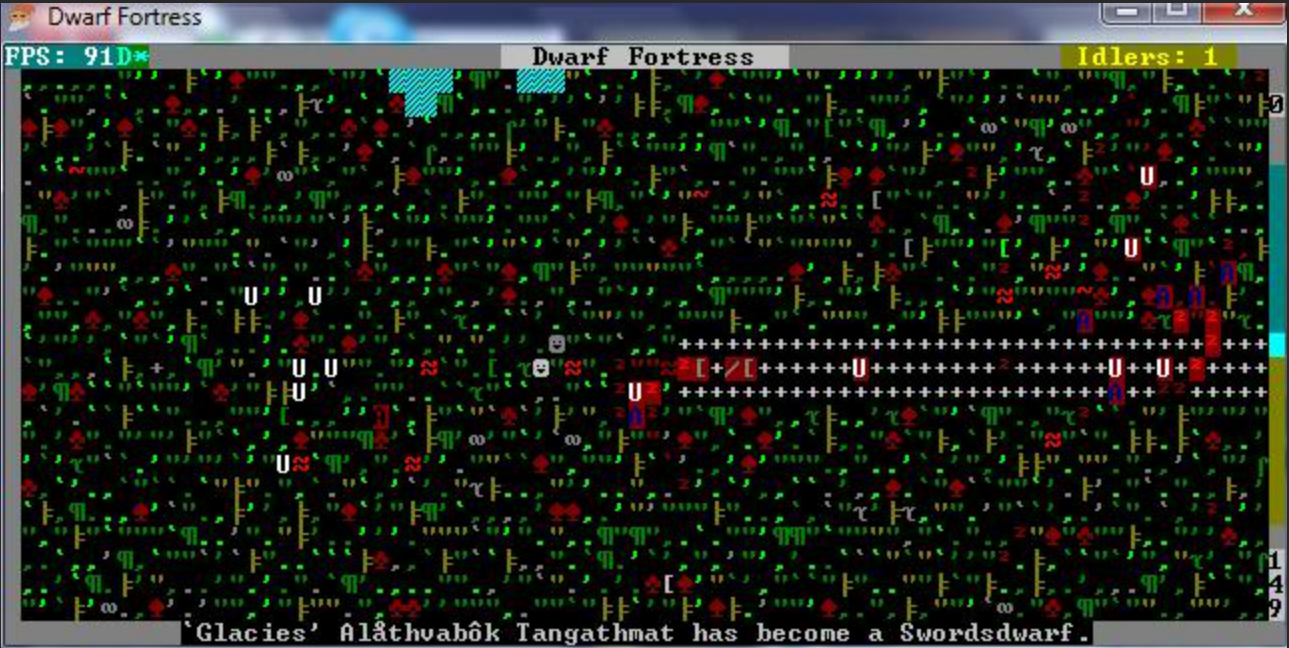
Fiya had told her of this place, but until she saw it up close it was hard to believe. Warm air from beneath had warmed the structure sufficiently that no snow remained on top of it. Either that or the wind kept it clean. In either case she could feel the evil ahead of her, like a solid wall of it as the mountains rose out of the swamps. It clouded her minds eye but Thafatha had been implicit in his instructions and had, with the command, provided a measure of his own strength to aid them. She felt no hesitation as she rode ahead of her column. No fear.

Only a slightly bitter taste in her mouth and the excitement of impending battle.

As they approached they could sense a shift in the wind and a foul smell soon brought the stench of death to their nostrils. The unicorns

began to get a little jumpy as they approached the slope and the ramp leading down from the fortress came into view. At it's base an immense slaughter had taken place. The corpses of unicorn and avar alike lay strewn about the shrubby marshland. As the group approached a trio of beasts emerged at the top of the ramp, running like mad towards them. The trio appeared to be the skeletal remains of beasts, though running as men and as they quickly closed she had time to register that they were in fact dwarves, bedecked in armor decorated in the bones of the fallen.

She rallied her group and signalled to the others on her flank and charged. These fearsome looking creatures were mortal and could be destroyed. The blessing of Thafatha lent her confidence that lasted until one of the dwarves, wielding a razor-sharp obsidian shortsword opened the belly of her unicorn as she tried to run it down and she was thrown from her beast. She hit the ground hard and was rolling over to stand when her mind registered that somehow the dwarf had already eviscerated her beast and had closed the distance between her mount and herself with amazing rapidity. A dark object swept towards her and carried her into oblivion as Glacies struck her down.



(Glacies had actually run off the map to the north a tad. Erith and Paulus (the only other two I could get geared up in time) are shown in center.

Additionally, I'm treating the blessing of Thafatha as a special effect from now on since I've added the [NOFEAR] tag to both unicorns and Avar. I may take this a step farther and add the [LIKESFIGHTING] to make them more suitably xenophobic.)

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 29, 2010, 02:51:26 pm**

Mid-winter year 20 Journal of Led

It has been a remarkably quiet year since last winter when the ambushes happened. Almost too quiet. We'd been expecting the elves to come. And come they did. Fre saw to them, as is her wont. I'm still not quite sure why our relations with the elves took a decidedly worse turn but Fre and Paulus seem to understand it far too well. Though they don't talk about it, they share an understanding in that regard. From what I've gathered from rumors and things, something happened at Onol Lened to bring this about. I remember our relations with them in Geshud Osod were vastly different. Paulus even built a vast indoor garden, or terrarium for them while they stayed. Though, admittedly, those were different elves.

The humans didn't come again this summer, for better or worse. Many of our number view them with considerable distrust given their off again, on again attitude towards us. Though no blood has been shed here by either side so at least there are no grudges in that regard.

Our own people I fear are little better and the caravan from Shellhelms met us with smirks and subtle jibes. They know something we don't know but won't say what it is. We didn't trade with them this year, more out of neglect than deliberate intention. All the trading supplies had been hauled to the depot but no one actually went to trade. By the time someone remembered, they were already packing up. ((Author's note:Totally my fault on this actually.)) Perhaps it's because Paulus hasn't been around to help ensure that things run smoothly.

He's actually been in the Accursed Crack almost this entire year and no one has seen hide nor hair of him. I've spent considerable time in my workshop myself glorifying the blessing and work of Mondul in bonecarvings. I even crossed to the reserve dining hall to see if I ran into him, but no such luck. I tried finding him but the passages that he's dug are now too numerous and convoluted for me keep track of and I returned before I got lost. I'm pretty sure things are well and food and drink have been consumed recently in the dining hall. I assume he's the only creature in this place that would leave his silverware crossed on the stoneware plate and push his chair back in.

Here's to a quiet year and ongoing work inside Mondul's holy place.

Now if only we could hear from the others that are supposed to be coming...

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Battlecat** on **September 29, 2010, 04:38:01 pm**

Glad to see you're still plugging away at this! Great writing as always!

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 04, 2010, 03:18:25 pm**

"Sir!"

Thesaurusaurus' voice echoed down the stone hallway, bumping into Led as he walked toward the Accursed Crack and his boneyard and workshop.

By the time the dwarf caught up with him the scribe was a little out of breath. "Sir, humans from Pesor Mardek, or wherever, have arrived to trade! Shall we trade with them?"

Led paused for a moment to consider the statement. He didn't like being bothered with such things but perhaps it was time they took economic considerations into their own hands.

"Yes. If they have anything useful go ahead and purchase it. And see that their wagons are full to the brim when they leave here. Get rid of everything useless thing you can."

"Sir?"

"The other tribe of humans wants to attack us. Likely for our wealth. Perhaps if we demonstrate that our friends have more to gain from trading than they can possibly get by trying to futiely lay siege to us they may cease their aggressions. Just because we CAN slaughter them if they lay siege to us doesn't mean we should. Perhaps it was time we begin taking our own diplomatic steps as well. So, trade for anything of use, and then fill their wagons with as much as they can carry."

"Very well. It shouldn't be a problem. We haven't really traded with anyone for some time."

"Good. Let them have the pick of what's brought to the depot. No reason to give it all to the dwarves of Shellhelms."

Thesaurusaurus nodded and smiled before hurrying off to designate the goods to be traded. The entire elven caravan had been taken and killed as per Fre's orders, so much of the trade goods would be the elven items. Perhaps sending them with the humans would have other additional side effects.

Like the elves wondering why the humans were suddenly flooded with elven trade goods when their own caravans were simply disappearing...

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 05, 2010, 03:39:02 pm**

It was with a grim but determined smile that Paulus made his way back towards the fortress proper along the lower road of the Accursed Crack. The path twisted and rose and fell torturously, and had he not carved it himself it's possible he would have gotten lost. But the view was spectacular. The rough hewn pathway liked the intricate series of caverns all along the length of the crack and seemingly randomly he would come across the burnished brown of a copper vein or the magenta hue of an iron vein, or even the faint glimmer of gemstones, still lying embedded in their natural state in the walls. Not to mention the spectacular rock formations, the helicités, stalactites and stalagmites cropping up along the stone like bizzare growths, centuries, or millenia old. Or perhaps older.

Paulus idly flicked a piece of rotting carcass from one of the bone spikes of his greaves as he traveled, sending it flying into the darkness next to him as he traversed a narrow passageway he had carved along the length of the crevasse itself. That little gibbet of rotting flesh was one of the last remnants of undead in the Accursed Crack. It had taken him nearly twenty years, and a number of harrowing near falls, not to mention countless battles with the undead, but the Accursed Crack had been purged. It was now safe to traverse. Or at least as safe as he could make it. He didn't doubt that countless undead possibly remained in the stagnant air of the lower reaches of the crevasse. Who knew how deep it truly was. He'd dropped a stone in from as far down as he could reach and heard it striking the walls and bouncing crazily for far, far too long afterwards. It could easily be a mile or more before the bottom was reached.

As he climbed the stair and emerged, stinking and covered in filth from the door he was surprised to so quickly run into Ragnar, who was coming down the stairs from the outside where she'd been on duty near the ramp.

"Oi, long time no see? How's that accursed place?" Ragnar gusted vaguely with her head towards the Crack.

"More silent than it's likely been in a thousand years. Except for the sound of your metal shoes. I think it was that that kept waking the dead from their slumber." Paulus winked slightly and fell in step next to her.

"Pfah, as if. More than likely it's your smell that's been doing it. You reek so foully I almost feel like dying and coming back myself right here and now!"

"Well then, we'd better get you drunk so you forget such foolish notions. What are you? Sober?"

"Heh, gonna have ta hurry though, ye can join me above, perhaps some rain will clean up your smell a bit. Fre spotted a group of insectoids moving fer us from the west. I wannae get in on the action."

"I'm game, but by the stones I need a drink first."

Ragnar moved to slap him on the back but a sudden cross-breeze blew some of his smell towards her and she shifted, wiping her hand on her blouse at her hip as if it were suddenly unclean.

They downed their drinks in almost record time, though Paulus was faster and then they, along with Fre headed up towards the bridge. No other lookouts had been posted and the scene they were met with was nearly disturbing. A half dozen insectoid creatures already lay in cage traps though several were still milling about near the entrance as the dwarves charged. The fierce and sudden attack stunned two, but three more popped up nearby to add to the confusion. Fre bashed one with her hammer, knocking the creature off the ramp and down, and another soon followed. Soon more stunned insectoids were flying, or rather, falling from the ramp to strike the hard stone below with satisfying crunches.

The trio were still gazing over the side watching as one of the insectoids who'd landed in a soft patch twitched and struggled to rise as Kolok appeared near the workshops below to finish it off. Wagons appeared at the rim and the guards in front of the lead wagon relaxed visibly to see fellow dwarves standing across the way instead of insectoids. The four Black bears guarding the entrance to the ramp had been torn to pieces by the savage bugs.

It was then that the thieves struck. Seemingly dozens of figures appeared, individually or in twos or threes, all apparently trying to take advantage of the momentary lapse in security. Insectoid master thieves appeared near the trio, and Fre, Ragnar and Paulus tore off in pursuit, while the wagons and caravan guards were left to deal with the goblin thieves and even a lizardman or two. One of which was later found on the ramp, apparently having been crushed under a wagon wheel.



((Thief warning x22 ... sigh))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 12, 2010, 03:50:26 pm**

A heavy frost had already touched the murky marshland in front of the Skull Keep of Mondul, a thin veneer of ice lying gleaming on the surface of the ponds in the morning sun of the chilly late fall day. Paulus and Fre stamped their feet to improve their circulations as the pair made their way carefully down the slippery ramp towards the base where they'd been taking sentry duty. The leather beneath their armor creaked slightly and the steel clanked where it struck stone. Fortunately the hobnailed steel boots provided ample traction among the stones of the ramp. As they reached the crest they noticed an eerie lack of sounds and surveyed the grisly scene below them.

An insectoid patrol had ambushed their sentry animals, the four large black bears tied at the base of the ramp and the creatures could still be seen below, quietly devouring one of the bear carcasses. The pair glanced at each other, grim nods speaking more than words as they each hefted their heavy warhammers and charged their foes.

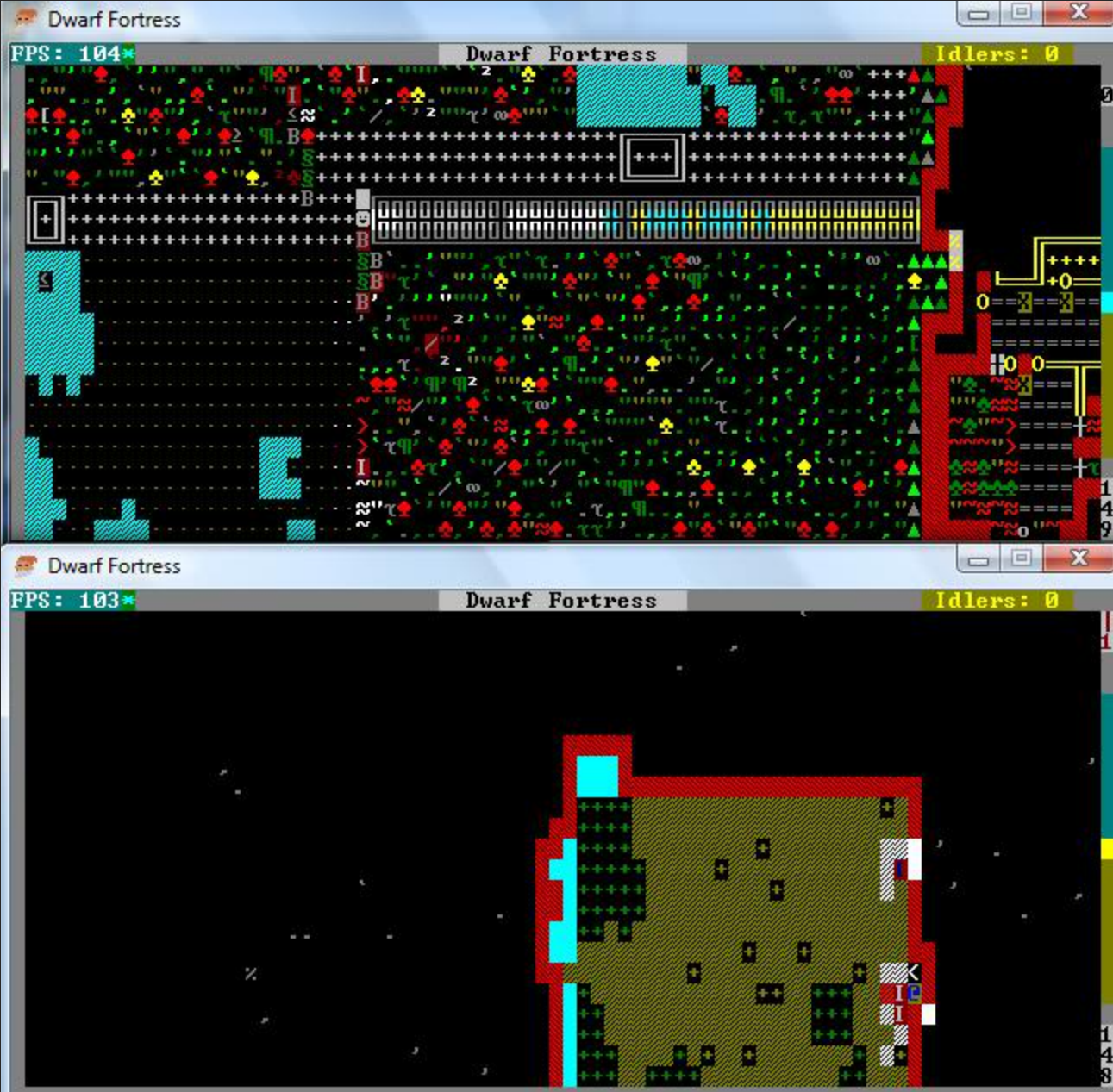
A pair of insectoids, two of the large cluster turned up towards them as they approached and began clicking in their bizzare speech as the others finally registered the appearance of the charging dwarves. The two moved to intercept the dwarves as they charged into the midst of them but even towering over the short creatures the insectoids simply lacked the mass to contend with a running dwarf in full steel armor. Fre and Paulus' initial charge led them into the midst of the mass of insectoids and soon a wild frenzy of motion erupted. Many of the bugs retreated a step in surprise, fluttering their wings and settling back down again a few paces away before beginning to move in.

Fre's first victim lay crumpled on the ground before her when a second creature grappled her from one side and received, for it's labors, a hammerstroke that caught it in mid-torso, sending it flying backwards and into the slushy pool next to the road. Fre took off after it, heading for the stairs and drew away several of the others. Paulus had little difficulty with the three that remained to him, the undead having taught him well how to use his armor to his full advantage and any attack that he couldn't avoid was simply deflected as he turned his body at the last second to send the blow glancing off. His skill was such that though dozens of blows rained down upon him, not a single one was telling as he steadily whittled the number of attackers down. By the time he had freed himself of assailants and gone to check on Fre she was kneeling casually in the quickly reddening slush of the intended lake inspecting her leg wound.

"How bad is it?"

"Bah, lucky bastard got me from behind. Didn't see it coming. Can't stand on it but I'll be fine."

She spat on the ground as Paulus surveyed the whitish ichor oozing out of the broken carapaces of the remainder of their foes.



Not an hour later Ragnar was already carrying the wounded Fre up the ramp and passed the departing dwarven caravan. The guards fingered their weapons animatedly as they saw the wounded dwarf but neither Fre nor Ragnar wanted to spare them the time to explain. Besides, they would see soon enough. Curiously as the pair disappeared into the central stairwell one of the guards elbowed another and soon three of the five were staring hard after the retreating pair talking in low whispers.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 13, 2010, 03:13:35 pm**

Late Spring, year 22, Fortress log in the hand of Thesaurusaurus

The Hound of Mondul announced after the dwaven merchants left last fall that the Accursed Crack had been officially purged. No undead presence remained, except in the underground lake which served as our initial water source those first few winters, and which still serves that purpose. Fortunately those few waterlogged undead bother us little.

Because of this great opening of the Crack the Hound has announced his intentions towards it. We've already been using it as a catacombs of sorts and it will continue in that function as long as dwarves live in this fortress to entomb their dead. I can think of no better place than that amazing natural crevasse. But the Hound intends to have constructed a roadway along the majority of the upper length of the Crack that can serve as a quick access path to the underground lake and the vast amount of resources readily available in the the fissure. We need do no prospecting for ore underneath our feet since scores of ore veins are visible along the crack and numerous jewels as well. A large variety of stone types is also present and so the Crack shall serve as our primary material supply source.

Countless bones of the undead lay scattered here and there on the ledges of the Crack and it has been a common duty to begin returning them to the boneyard this winter and spring for our High Priest to continue his work in preparing the furniture of Mondul's temple even as the rest of us continue building the inner floors. More than sufficient to keep all of us in labor, though the long strolls through the Accursed Crack has brought out many a gleam in our dwarven eyes as we begin to understand the vast amount of wealth that remains but a short, and now safe, walk away.

If only people would quit getting lost and thirsty on their way to their jobs. Far too many set out to retrieve bones only to get halfway there and turn about because they're thirsty and half lost. Fortunately for us our innate sense of direction underground can always find us our way back.

Because we've been so busy and Fre has been laid up we sealed the Depot against the elves this spring and they've not approached. It's not so much that they're dangerous at this point as we're busy. Besides, we've done our share of complying with tribal mandate in

regards to our relations with them. The limp-wristed pansy-sniffing tree-huggers just keep coming, and it's a bloody nuisance whenever we let them in.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **darkflagrance** on **October 17, 2010, 01:54:21 am**

I've been following this fort on and off, drawn to it by the writing...

I'm curious as to how high the fps is in as old a fort as this?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 20, 2010, 06:21:55 pm**

((Fortunately I manage to keep my FPS hovering in the 14-20 range while it's running on my laptop. My desktop usually averages about 5-10 higher. Though I've deliberately kept any FPS killing water features off the map and may even consider draining the underground lake to see if that helps. Of course, I've yet to locate the underwater river either so who know, but from forum discussions I've heard that most features actually slow the FPS more if they are undiscovered. We'll see how things work. I've been trying to get immigrants for a while now but... my liason is dead, by my own hand. Useless injured bugger that he was. So technically that causes immigration problems as I recall.))

Trading log, year 22, in the hand of Boink

Heheheheeee... my god is truly pleased with this place. According to records I've been able to access through the fort scribe we've imported nearly a million ingots worth of goods while at the same time exporting only about two hundred thousand of our own. Of course, that doesn't take into account the material that has been brought it from the failed attempts at theft, murder, destruction and the like.

Both the humans and the dwaven caravans arrived this year. Trade went fine with the humans, they brought some interesting materials and we acquired all that we wished and gave them a twenty thousand ingot profit to boot. Granted most of it was human-sized clothing of avar origin, which, of course, is useless to us. We also had them cart off the rather intricate but oversized avar armor. They seemed quite pleased with the arrangement and have vowed to return next year if they can possibly make it.

Trade with the dwarven caravan seemed subdued, like normal, though useful enough. We acquired a number of cut gemstones from them and as soon as Mondul's temple is complete the Hound has assured me I can proceed with my own plans.

As tribute this year we sent them with another load of heavy gold bars. Nine large bars was all the wagons seemed able to support and even I could see the eager gleam on the faces of the merchants as they drove out. Can't really blame them. But still, it's a shame to see such wealth leaving our fortress instead of being properly hoarded. Or better yet, utilized in crafts and furnishings...

The dwaves also didn't recieve such a bounteous reception as the humans. Perhaps because we simply gave it all to them, though it pains me to say it. Led has assured me that it is politically beneficial and I suppose, as such, it is justified. But we all had to go out and gather more for the fall caravan and the picking, particularly that in areas near the fortress, and thus considerably safer, have become slim. Ah well. I hear Ragnar is to carve out an extension of the great hall with Sarah and erith and I'll be able to smooth it. That and I still have Fre's project to finish. It's nice having work.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 21, 2010, 03:48:54 pm**

The heavy winter snows had already fallen in the mountains around Geshud Osod, and the swamps were just beginning to solidify, the murky water turning to a deadly slush, too soft to stand on, too cold to wade through safely. Fre stood at the base of the ramp, idly humming a tune to herself as she stretched, trying futilely to work out the kink in her back. The familiar twinge locked up her muscles momentarily and she forced herself erect before trying to relax the muscles again. Darn injury was always worse when it was cold out.

A noise behind her alerted her to some presence and she heard the heavy feet of a dwarf cross the icy span of the high bridge, thumps echoing in the quarry underneath it. When the dwarf was in sight she turned to look and Der Kartoffel was tromping down the ramp.

"Hoy, brought you a flask of ale ta help keep ye warm out here lass."

Fre gladly accepted the brew, tucking it in under her gambeson where it could keep reasonably warm.

"Thanks. How's the Anvil?"

"Oh, busy as usual in this weather. I saw everyone to their drinks before taking this job from the list."

He looked down at the icy snow that layered the ground. "Large red-backed spider silk sock. Seen it around here?"

"Oh, aye. They were clearing out the other pieces that were left from next to that bush up yonder."

"Ah... ooh, and there are still a few of the berries left on that thing."

"Berries? In this weather? You must be mad."

"Oh, possibly. They're not berries you eat anyway." He paused, hesitantly. "Some of the better spice plants finally come ripe after the first good frosts. It's a hard waxy berry, not edible in and of itself."

"Ah, well, if you say so."

"Aye, one of the Lizardmen told me about it when I was feeding him. Apparently it's quite the treat in their diet since they don't like goin' outside much in winter."

Fre just grunted. "Well, I suppose it'll be quiet 'ere for a while. I think that sock was the last piece in the immediate area and we should have enough to trade with for now, aye?"

Der Kartoffel nodded at her and slipped down the last tier of the ramp into the ankle deep snows.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 27, 2010, 03:05:56 pm**

Early Spring 23

Thesaurusaurus cinched his threadbare robe around his frame and stepped out into the bright light, squinting at the glare that bounced off the snow covering the countryside beneath him. Many would have stopped at the top of the ramp to admire the view but the tired scribe had no time for such frivolities. Besides, he hated the out of doors.

As he headed down the ramp his visage was drawn to the snow lying splashed with red at the base of the ramp. He rushed down and stood, slightly pop-eyed at the carnage littering the bottom of the ramp. The Hound and the Hunter of Mondul stood idly near the base of the ramp, just above the snow level chatting leisurely as the snow's swirled around them.

Thesaurusaurus nearly wailed: " I just had this place cleaned up! What do I look like? The maid? Can't you two keep it clean for more than 5 weeks?"

Fre just grinned at him. "Hey, it's not my fault these party-crashers showed up."

She pulled a broken bolt from her belt, using the piece to pick something out of her teeth.

The Hound just shrugged.

"Maybe if they ask nicely next time we'll let them in for a look see."

Thesaurusaurus sighed, defeated.

"I'll send another crew down to pick up the pieces. I guess we'll have plenty to trade with this year."

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on November 02, 2010, 02:54:50 pm

The scribe sat in his office, among the mechanisms and levers and little balls of every stone and metal conceivable. Among the chaos of his office the dwarf sat, head buried in his hands and silently wept for his one remaining son. His son that might as well be no more. His grief washed over him in waves and he considered venting his fury at the heavens by taking up his weapon and going forth to do battle with the undead and elements outside in his own naked glory. There would be time for that later, though, and for now he simply wept for his son.

His SON! Victim to a goblin thief of all things. Had not his son given himself to Mondul and created, in her name, a glorious artifact? A herald, if rumors were true, of things to come? And yet, she, in her grace, could not take his son to herself. No, a lucky blow as the goblin was discovered and panicked had left his child crippled. Not in body, but in mind. The head wound itself was starting to heal, but the damage underneath it would never mend. The dwarf would permanently be a burden upon the others. He would never work again, likely never even leave his bed where his father cared for him. Changed his bedclothes, wiped the drool from his face, fed him, brought him water.

Had it been him, he could have borne it. Or so he thought. A father taken prematurely is a poor thing indeed, but to lose a son while still in his youth? Particularly after his wife and other child had already died and been taken to his goddess? He was alone again. Alone among his kind. His family line would be no more. He had not the heart to marry another.

The door opened quietly behind him and a cloaked figure entered, closing the door behind themselves and securing it.

The faint whisper of the dwarf's voice reached his ears and penetrated his thoughts, despite his inner turmoil.

"My condolences to you, Thesaurusaurus. I have come to offer you my services in this time of your need."

"S-ss-services? What could you possibly offer me that would help?" spat the scribe.

"Led teaches that Mondul comes for us in our own time and that we should not work to hasten our own departure. Nor, apparently, those of our kind unless in warfare. I have further enlightenment for you then. The gods can take on themselves more than one form surely. Where Mondul embodies death for us dwarves surely the goddess reaches out to other races?"

The scribe stifled his sniffing and was listening. "I know other races have their own deities of death. Is not the human one called Sut, or somesuch?"

"Indeed. All races die and I tell you that the goddess embodies death in all it's forms, both pure and unpure. I come to you now as Her messenger in the name of Ile, lizardmen god of death. Yes, Death ... and Murder. Join me in this further calling ... in my service to our goddess, and in the name of Ile I shall release your son from this unnatural state he remains trapped in. Surely you do not wish to see your son spend the next century in such a state?"

"I ... I ... of course not." Thesaurusaurus paused for some time and the cloaked stranger let him think. After a time the scribe looked up, a determined look in his eye.

"No, my son must not suffer such travesty. He has performed his life's work and has been blessed abundantly. Please, speed his journey along to the next life. What must I do?"

"For now? Pledge devotion to Ile and I shall instruct you further in time."

"Very well. I do pledge to serve Ile until such a time as I am called to stand before my goddess."

The cloaked figure bowed deeply and left the scribe to his reflections. As the door closed the figure smiled. At long last the worship of Ile among the dwarves was beginning to grow. The guild of Assassins had begun recruiting.

((Any wishing to be dwarfed in the future now have to option of being a member of the Fahlstrom clan, the Loyalists, the Followers of Mondul and now the Assassins guild. In order to be granted entry you must pm me with the correct name of the cloaked figure. The cloaked figure is one of the current named dwaves in the fortress. Oh, and since my liason is dead I have not gotten any migrants at all. Anyone know if that can be remedied? I've increased the pop cap in the init files but still no more dwarves.))

Title: Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)
Post by: Paulus Fahlstrom on November 08, 2010, 06:43:34 pm

The sun warmed his armor in the early morning light, and though it was high summer the nights still got cool enough to see your breath at times. The rivers had finally thawed into the sluggish torpor of half frozen streams, but a few more days of sunshine would surely see them flowing clear again. The stone behind and under him moved and shivered in the wind and sun but the ramp did not truly budge. Nevertheless the Hound could feel the stone under his feet, the movements of the human trader's wagons rumbling up the slope towards the exit of the Skull-temple of Mondul.

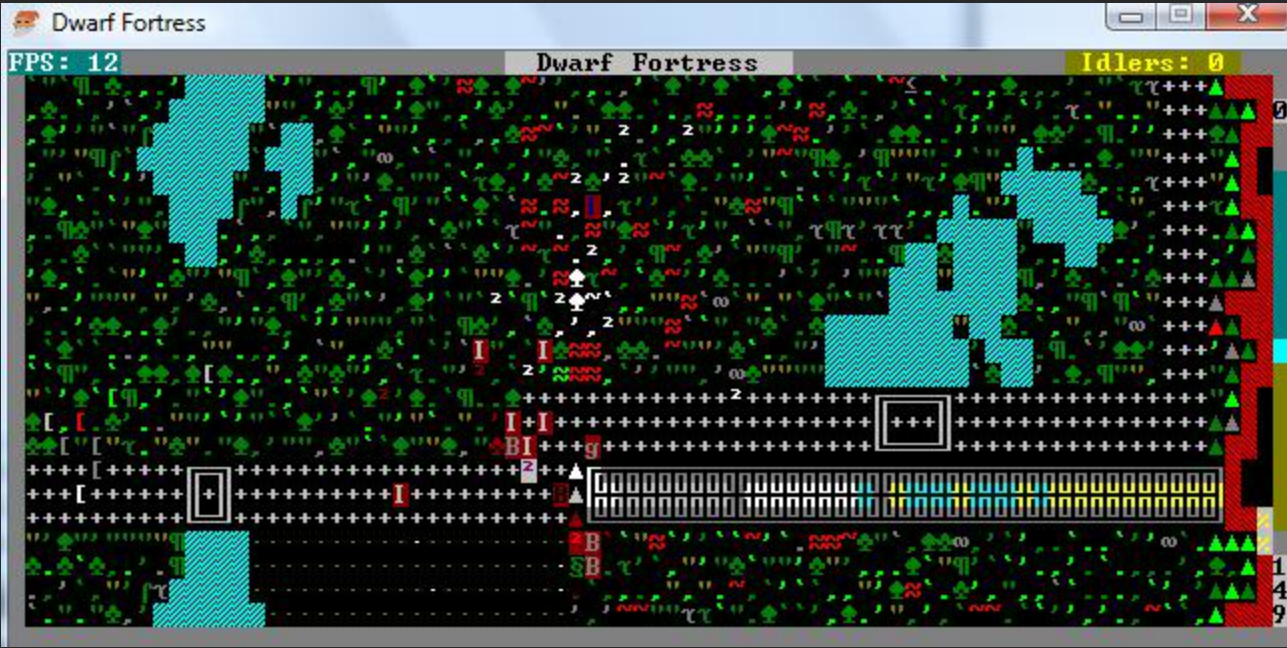
A light skittering vibration brought his attention up and to his more immediate surroundings. The faintest of scratchings, bizzare, almost random tremors that held the promise of invading insects made him glance up. They were hard to feel, but once they got close enough, easy to spot. With practice. The Hound smiled to himself. His own steel shell surpassed theirs in strength, and his already prodigious skill in fighting meant he rarely had to rely on his armor. But his weapon was steel, not something stronger, and it took time to crack through even an insectoids' touch carapace. Two groups converged on him and now even the four fully grown black bears seemed uneasy at their places, staked to the ground as they were.

A sudden motion in his peripheral vision surprised him as a single goblin thief gasped in surprise as it rounded the corner of the ramp, hardly expecting to see a dwarf standing guard down this far. The steel hammer exploded into motion, clipping the surprised goblin in the shoulder and driving the thing down and back. A second blow crushed it's ribcage as the first insectoid patrol sprang up, two or three of the creatures flying madly at the bears while the rest went for the armored dwarf. The insectoid leader had sprung at the dwarf's back but the dwarf span incredibly fast, already bringing his hammer around in a wide arc and catching the moving insectoid. The strength of the blow changed the creature's direction in mid-air and sent it spinning crazilly north, clipping a tree and leaving it lying broken on the ground. The dwarf was on it in a flash and soon the insectoid guard lay in a heap, oozing whitish ichor onto the black loamy earth.

One of the bears was bellowing madly as insectoids circled it, the second group having joined the first and coming tearing up from the

south, attacking the bears staked their. One of the first bears had an insectoid pinned on the ground and was mauling it brutally even as the insectoid was desperately trying to cut through the heavy fur on it's belly. The dwarf waded into the fray, sending creatures flying and attracting bugs like moths to a flame. The silver of steel shone through the fracas of limbs and creature after creature was swatted away. All but the one fierce bear was now down, as were several of the insectoids, most lying broken against some nearby tree where their momentum had been suddenly stopped. A second insectoid lept to the aid of the one beneath the bear and the large animal seemed to be weakening.

A sudden swipe of a chitinous blade sent red blood flying from the dwarf's leg and it gave a lurch before crumpling the dwarf to the ground. Stubbornly the dwarf fought on, flailing and rending with hammer and limbs at the remaining four insectoids. One rolled on top of the dwarf but the sudden shift in momentum brought the dwarf up in a roll and soon the insectoid was lying beneath him as his steel gauntlets pummelled and pounded the insectoid into oblivion. The other three fared little better in the long run, though the battle was long and the dwarf lay overexerted on the ground for some time.



By the time the caravan reached the base of the ramp the dwarf was again on his feet, but breathing heavily amid the carnage. A quick nod to the caravan leaders and he waved them through, assuring them that the fighting was over, at least here. The guards walked by in near awe as they'd not seen any other dwarves ascend the ramp, nor could they see any deceased among the carnage. That a single armored dwarf and four tethered bears had taken on twelve insectoids and come out with little more than scratches simply boggled the mind. As the merchant waved his thanks and goodbyes he noticed a small silverish ring hanging on a chain around the dwarf's neck. It must have come loose in the fighting and at the sight of it the merchant almost started in surprise before turning away and clucking calmly to his somewhat panicked beasts of burden.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **skaltum** on **November 21, 2010, 04:59:53 pm**

WOW extreme kudos for keeping this alive for so long

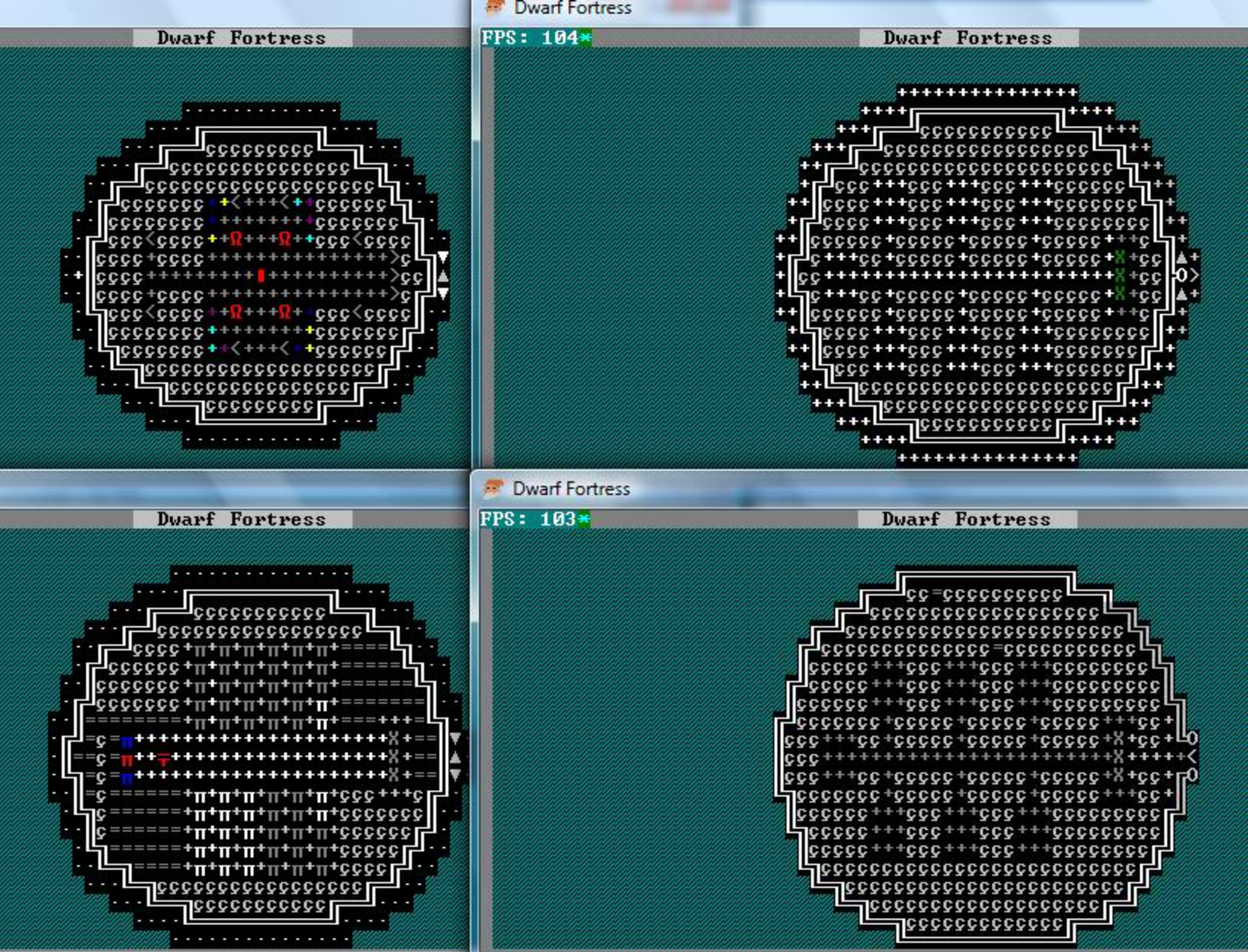
is this still 40d?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 22, 2010, 04:02:55 pm**

The small group of dwarves climbed the staircase carefully, taking each step as it came. The way to the High fane of Mondul was a significant climb but this was their first official worship. They wouldn't be using the altar itself, but instead the sermon hall just beneath it. As they rose they passed the three treasure chambers of their fortress, space for their valued artifacts and items set out.

The vaults were eerie sort of rooms and as soon as one entered the floor found oneself surrounded by dozen upon dozens of cleaned and carved skull totems from the enemies of their people. The sermon chamber was spacious. In truth it was vast. Far larger then necessary for what few dwarves actually resided in the fortress. It had sufficient seating for fully sixty worshippers and each of the chairs was of superiour quality and decoration. Each was adorned with the bones of the fallen and wrought with such prodigious skill as to permit nearly the history of their fortress to be told on the furniture alone. It was a sight to behold.

And it was finally finished.



All that remained to be completed in the temple were the formal design and layouts for the chambers of trial. And that could wait since one of them was already full functional, even if not entirely completed.

Besides... the dwarves had other things to keep them busy. Far too many things.

((Oh, the left two are the High fane and the sermon chamber. Only Masterwork skull totems are permitted in those. The other two are the upper two treasure display rooms and have only exceptional skull totems. Lesser quality totems are used for decoration in less important areas, though there are few of those totems, to be honest.

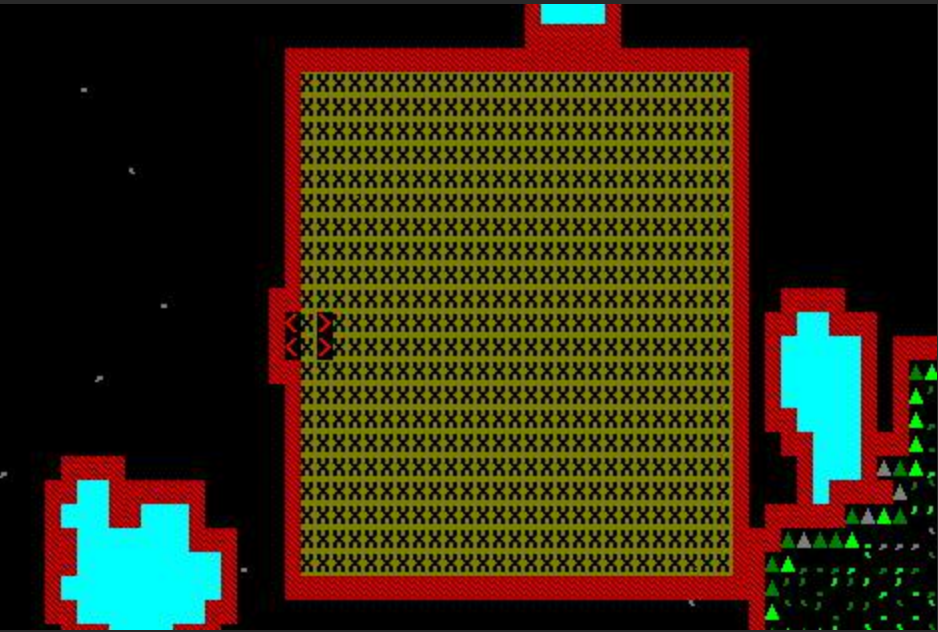
Thanks skaltum. And yes, it's still 40d. I'd love some of the features from the newer versions, but this was started too long ago and with the entire embark area selected I'm going to finish my plans for this before moving on. Thanks for reading!))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 07, 2010, 04:41:25 pm**

Spring 27, Fortress log of Geshud Osod in the hand of Thesaurusaurus

It has been years now since some of us saw the outside sun. We've cloistered ourselves in our fortress so that we could work in peace on the next portion of the anticipated constructions. The work that, according to the Hound, may well take decades or centuries to complete. The work on our wall. On THE Wall of Zealots as it were. Nearly everyone has been busy bringing in the quarried stone and turning it into blocks in the central workshops that we've set up in the Fouth hall, or rather, in the Grand Hall. It has been properly expanded and is now a massive room, with vaulted ceilings and smoothed or engraved stone. Excellent statues have been set up at intervals and the workshops set up near the east of it, where it connects to the new barracks, armory and from there to the central stair. I have wished often that it were more full, particularly of children, who so exemplify life. But perhaps it is appropriate that no such children grace the structure considering this is a fortress of Mondul, goddess of Death. I shall have to ask Led about that particular aspect of our beliefs. My own children have long since passed from the carefree time of youth and much to my sorrow, have gone on to our Lady. Or at least one of them has. My other child, who a few years ago was injured greviously in the head by a goblin thief has, miraculously, recovered entirely from his wound, though the scarring is considerable. We're still not quite sure how it happened. ((OOC: I was under the impression that head wounds didn't heal. Pretty much ever.))

In any case, we've cleansed the Accursed Crack, now no longer quite so accursed, to be honest and in our cleansing have uncovered and marked many, many veins of ore to be mined out in the near future. But for now work on the blocks continue. We've designated a storeroom for them, dug into sand, near the site of construction and as the bins fill in the stockpiles near the workshops we move them en masse to the final location. The walls will be constructed from there via an access tunnel to be dug when we were ready.



We're now ready. In fact, with the exception of the stone in the quarry under the temple, we've used everything else that is not specifically saved for custom work.

We've been working tirelessly for these long months, but without outside disturbances, merchants, ambushes and the like things have

progressed remarkably quickly. There are just over 2500 blocks cut and ready to place. The outer walls will be exclusively granite, quarried from deep within the earth, while the inner walls will be of different stones to give the wall a more defensible, layered approach. It will be fully seventy feet wide ((I'm assuming 1 tile in game is approxamitely 10')) and reach up into the sky, smooth and unbroken around our entire claimed land.

Much though has gone into preparation for it and before we sealed ourselves in the lumberjacks, Kolok and... um, I'll have to look her up later, Reg I think, cleared the land. During the summer months when the ponds are thawed we'll build up and during the long winters we'll build out so that we can cut out the water in the ponds and build on a solid foundation the whole way across. The roots of the wall will be sunk into bedrock to prevent settling and cracking, unless the mountains themselves break. Heh.

Priestess Glacies is in charge of the constructions while the Hound and Huntress act as our military protection in case of danger. Considering we'll be opening a breach into the fortress proper in order to construct the walls that is a very real concern. Our masons have reported a number of thieves in the past several months looting the battlefields left unprotected in our isolation. Ah well. Can't really begrudge them a few useless avar rags that we'd just trade away anyways. At least they're not stealing our booze or gems.

Love to see the look on a goblin thief's face should it enter the Temple itself and make it to the High fane. Hundreds of skulls all stare at the entrance from the stairs and it's quite an imposing sight. Ah well, back to work. I hear Ragnar will be breaking through the topsoil any minute now and we're to be ready to begin the walls the second she's done.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **skaltum** on **April 08, 2011, 08:22:12 pm**

Reviving because this is amazing and should be in the hall of legends if it isnt already

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **July 30, 2011, 10:40:10 pm**

The clerk wiped the sweat off his brow so that it wouldnt' interfere in the upcoming battle but his helmet still felt uncomfortable and awkward. His plate armor was even worse, a heavy solid affair of steel masterfully embellished with the bones of their fallen foes. His ink-stained fingers trembled slightly as he heard footsteps echoing up the stairs towards the alcove with the lever. Next to him crouched a second dwarf, cloaked despite the heat but similarly armored underneath. He himself carried a heavy steel warhammer, preferred weapon for the priests of Mondul who often hunted the dead as often as the living. The other cloaked figure carried a keen steel shortsword, torchlight glinting off of it.

The room they stood in reeked. It reeked of offal and decay, of bloodstains left uncleaned. But all of those smells were old smells, and faint in comparison with the mingled scents of a plethora of caged creatures. Insectoid, goblins, lizard-men and tiger-men. Thieves, child-stealers, raiders and soldiers. Another scent was in the air.

Fear.

Thesaurusaurus gave a start when a hand clamped down on his arm.

"There is no need to fear. You know why we are here. We are worshippers of death. Of murder. We have discussed this, and at the end of the day we shall be stronger than ever. Every death we bring our deity will grant us favor. Favor, and power. Ragnar has approved of this... exercise and will take care of the others. It will be smoothed over and none need know more. She has been told that the Hound approved the training and to open the gates again at the proper signal."

The clerk nodded, tight-lipped but didn't say a word. He didn't dare, lest it betray his fear. His infrequent lessons had occurred with the leader of this new group at random and odd locations. The old summer-home of the deceased liason. The grave of one of the merchant guards. The third alcove on the east side of the accursed crack heading north from the fortress proper. Thesaurusaurus was still somewhat reticent, despite his committment. He still had a hard time accepting that there was a single deity of death for the various races who just called him by different names. His prayers still ascended to Mondul, at least in private. Another of these went up now and for some reason his blood ran cold.



A lever clinked in the background and he could hear chains being rattled as cages rapidly dismantled before their eyes. His teacher grinned coldly. "Do not worry about being interrupted. From what I understand, the Hound and Fre are just cleaning up after an Avar ambush. Everyone should be quite busy."

And then, cacophony and chaos enveloped him as insects sprang at him out of the semi-darkness chitinous blades on their arms seeking to still his life. His shield came up to block just in time though it forced him back a step. His hammer swung out and missed as another of the creatures jumped in from behind him. His armor probably saved his life then, and only another hundred or so times before it ended. Somewhere along the way he decided to go and thank Oddbod and Kolok since Pete had already passed on. They were the closest thing to armorers that their band had.

It was as if his brain became detached during the fighting and he was thinking of things that needed to be done later while the rest of his mind focused on the fight. Every once in a while his non-fighting side would pause and admire the graceful arc of steel rushing down to crush the carapace of a lunging insectoid as it sprang at him, or the way he could use only the edge of the shield to deflect a blow sideways, to glace harmlessly off his armor. A few of the captured held weapons, but it was not the weapons that were the most fearsome tools. The bugs themselves were their own weapons and immediately after being released began attacking the pair. It was only natural that all of them should be finished before the lizardmen and tigermen and goblins should get the courage to approach.

During the fray his calculating side made note of the lizardman, that it saluted his mentor and spoke to him in a sibilant tongue that he could not understand. To his amazement the dwarf chuckled and responded back in kind, though with clear linguistic difficulty. They saluted again before an insectoid crashed into the dwarf and Thesaurusaurus himself had his attention wrenched away by a wicked slash from another insectoid.

At the end even the cowardly goblins fought, with tooth and nail. But the last to go were the goblins. It wasn't until silence had descended upon the room again and the clerk realized that nothing now stirred in the semi-darkness, except three prisoners whose cages had failed

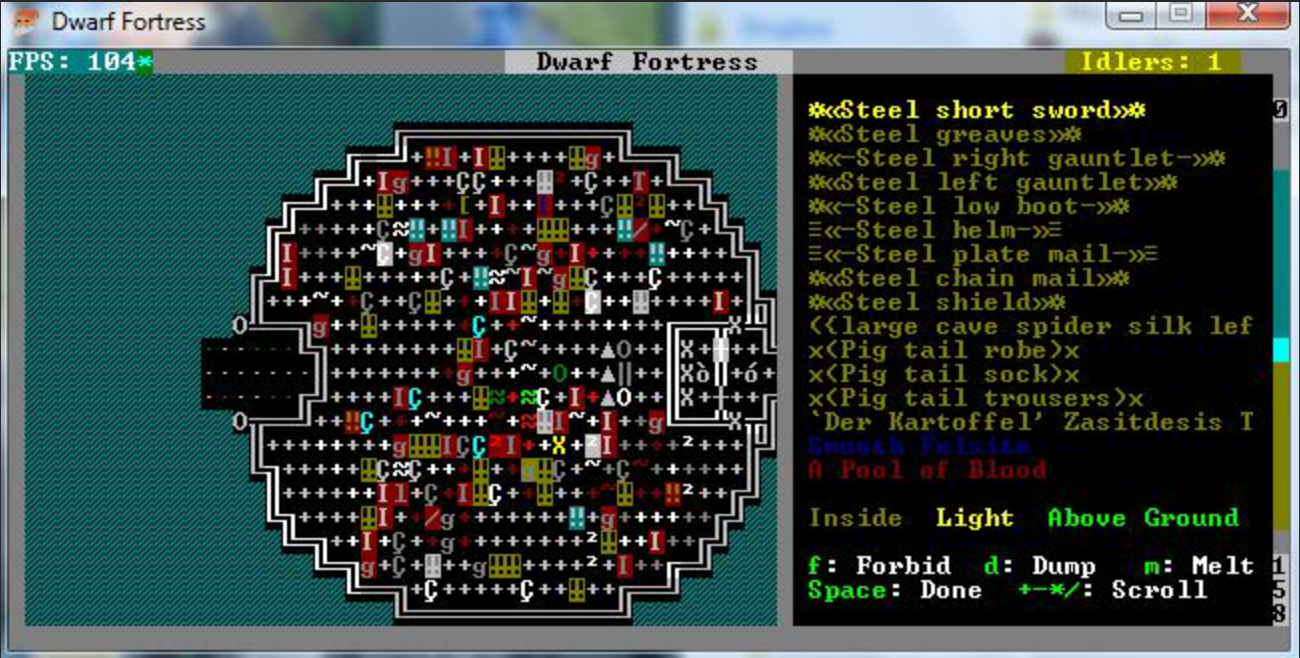
to open, that Thesaurusaurus realized he was the only dwarf standing. He found his fellow locked in a death embrace with a goblin. A dwarven sword lay skewered through a goblins leg and the pair had their hands wrapped around each others throats. The dwarf had apparently suffocated. The goblin bled to death shortly thereafter.

He said another quick prayer to his goddess and felt that all was right again. A warmth flooded into him and he felt weak.

No. Not weak. Tired. Powerful, or more so, but tired.

He dropped to one knee amidst the carnage, unfazed and victorious. He felt what it was to be alive then, well and truly and knew he could never go back to being the same meek, tired old clerk he had always been. The only thing left to do was think about how to conceal his newfound strength from the others.

And continue the work. He rapped a short succession of beats against stone of the floor and the doors soon clicked open as he strode from the room. He needed to make preparations to bury the dwarf that had taught him so much about life. And Death.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 22, 2011, 03:07:23 pm**

It had been years since the fortress of Geshud Osod had sealed itself in. Most of the dwarves had spent little time out of doors and the Hound of Mondul had been one of them. Only the masons, directed by Glacies, had routine access to the surface weather, a simple fact that many of the dwarves were grateful for.

Particularly since the outside was frozen for eight months of the year.

For three years the dwarves had accepted trade caravans from the humans alone, sealing up the passageways to the Depot for any other comers, elf and dwarf alike. Now both the Hand and the Hound of Mondul stood guard at the base of the ramp.

Fre stamped her feet, trying to vainly shake some of the flies away from her face.

"Bah, I can't abide flies. I don't know how you stand it with them buzzing incessantly around you."

The Hound looked up, face impassive, gaze distant as if lost in thought. He cocked his head as as faint buzzing tremors could be felt through his feet.

"Meh, it's not flies I'm worried about."

Fre swatted another and gave an exultant cry as she removed her hand, leaving a small black and red smear on her breastplate.

"Hah, got one! That calls for a drink. I'ma headin' in. Call if anything fun happens."

At the top of the ramp she glanced behind her. The sun glinted off of Paulus far below, whose hammer now rested in his hand as he idly swung it back and forth as if stretching.

The last few years had been good. She sighed, contented, and took a deep breath, before coughing violently and doubling over in pain. Her lung injury had never fully healed and still pained her. Many a morning she woke up in a sweat, gasping for air that her panicked body simply couldn't seem able to supply fully. Everything took longer longer now as well. Even the climb up the central stair now left her gasping like a fish out of water.

Then it struck her. This must be what it felt like to get old. Somehow, she simply never thought it would happen to her. The thought brought a strange giddiness, as if somehow she had beaten her foes. As if the elvish demons that haunted her dreams had lost somehow by not destroying her sooner.

She straightened out and headed below, out of breath by the time she arrived at the Bold Anvil. It seemed strangely empty without Der Kartoffel, and she was forever finding little flasks of strange liquids all over the place that she dare not try. Not after that first one that had left her wrenching her guts out in the sand near the refuse pile.

The alarm call reverberated through the stone around her, a heavy hammer striking a foot thick metal rod embedded deep into the bedrock of the fortress. A single hit. Repeated three times. Ah, just an ambush. By the time she'd make it top side and could catch her breath it would likely all be over. She poured herself a glass and sat at the end of the bar. Five minutes later Sarah rushed through from the wall-side, hammer in hand and went by without saying a word.

Lost in her thoughts she didn't know how long it was before Ragnar kicked the door open, helping a limping Paulus in as they sat at the bar. Ichor stained the outside of Paulus' armor in dozens of places and a few large gashes could be seen in the metal. Blood, dark and red dripped rapidly out of the Hound's right glove pooling in a little puddle on the floor next to where he sat. Ragnar was splattered in gore, but none of it appeared to be her own.

Both dwarves had slightly maniacal grins.

"Fre, ya missed the fun! Paulus here nearly got hisself et by the little beasties."

Paulus popped Ragnar upside the head lightly with his good arm. "Bugger off, eh?"

One look at Ragnar sent the other sniggering and soon all three were laughing heartily.

It didn't take too much longer for all three to take one of the larger tables in the corner and to have broken open a half dozen kegs in celebration.



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 30, 2011, 06:18:31 pm**

Ragnar cursed silently to herself as she worked the stone with her shovel. It promptly occurred to her that with the noise she was making and the distance she was from the fort it would make little difference.

She quickly began swearing out loud.

"Of all the flamin' ideas o' how ta get rid o' the undead..." A grunt and the stone in front of her broke loose, a large chunk fell to the debris strewn floor. She'd clear some room later and toss the larger chunks off the edge into the Accursed Crack itself to make room for more.

Her voice put on a tenor-ish sound "We'll just drain the lake!" as she grinned stupidly and cocked her head to one side. "Sun-touched idjits."

Another grunt as another large chunk broke loose from the wall ahead of her revealing a darkish stain spreading across the stone. She surveyed the little cavern she had carved out on this level and the twin ramps that led to the main outlet for the intended lake behind her that would dump the water into the fissure.

"Don't know what I was thinking tellin' 'em it was a good idea. Should have known. Ah should've known."

Her shovel struck again and she leveraged the metal handle back from where she had struck. A chunk of the wall shifted and almost instantly a massive roaring filled the tunnel, knocking her back and sweeping her off her feet in the wall of pressurized water that shot out of the hole she had created. Her light went out and she was left in darkness, tumbling in the water, unable to get air for what felt like an eternity. Her head struck something hard and she reached out and caught herself on the lip to the ramp. She dared not let go, despite the burning in her lungs and arms as the water tore past her.

After what felt like another indeterminable time spots started appearing in her vision and she knew she would have to move or die.

With near herculean strength she pulled herself up to the lip and out of the main current into the little upper room she had carved. Miraculously she managed to throw herself into the clear space between the two ramps of flow and lay gasping in the small pocket of air that remained in the room and water eddied around her and flowed swiftly but less turbulently now through the exits into the void behind and beneath her.

She sucked air in great lungfuls, or tried to between the great fits of coughing up water. The cold water rushed past her, filling her life and she sat waist deep in water leaning against a cavern wall. Only hoping now that the water would stop running before her air supply failed altogether.

She shook her head clear.

"Of course I'd be the one tasked to attempt this idocy. I'm the only one crazy enough to try and drain a lake from beneath."

She relaxed as the water rushed by her and was nearly lulled to sleep by the rushing water. And suddenly in her ears she heard a voice.

"Ragnar, my child. You have served me well of late. I give you now my blessing. Be thou reborn!"

A sudden warmth filled her limbs like a rushing fire and in the dark and damp of the cave she shot to her feet, gasping and wakeful suddenly as wisps of steam flowed past her nose from where she stood in the water. The knowledge of her god's presence suddenly filled her with an inner peace and surety. She knew she would survive.

It took what seemed like an eternity for the water to run out and soon she could hear the sounds of splashing from above. Likely Paulus finishing off the last of the undead in the Crack, the waterlogged zombie cave alligators, lizardmen and whatnot that lurked in the water above. Not long after the water slowed to a stream and one of the ramps ceased to be utilized altogether. As she exited she stumbled across her shovel, wedged into a corner by the force of the initial flow and she made her way, soaking wet towards the fortress.

By the time she was halfway there she was, once again, dry. Her limbs felt invigorated, as if the water had washed off her burdens and the cares of the past lifetime and as she approached the fortress she exulted in her newfound confidence. Shouting she proclaimed:"I have been reborn!"

It echoed around and around in the Crack she had once so despised, rebounding on her as she felt the truth of that statement ring through her. It wasn't until she entered the fortress proper that something else occurred to her as Oddbodd gave her a strange look, and looked again after she had passed.

Boink came across her and gasped suddenly. "Ragnar! You're naked!"

(Yeah, all her clothes had long since rotted off. Pretty much everyone is in this position but in her case she had so many coverings of dirt, blood, vomit and such no one would have been able to tell. Amazing what a bath will do. I think I'll have to work on clothing my dwarves a little better. lol.

Oh, and Ragnar is immodest. ;))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 31, 2011, 07:03:55 pm**

A Zombie Cave Bear has guzzled some <<Dwarven ale [25]>>!

((To be perfectly honest... I have no idea what to make of this one. I don't know where that zombie cave bear is. All chasm undead and

underground lake undead have been dispatched to the afterlife. (again) And we haven't had dwarven ale for years. Much less forbidden dwarven ale. Mmmm... it just sounds better that way.

In any case, this is an undead bear after a true dwarven spirit. Once found it shall be obtained for arena entertainment. I'll even drop barrels of alcohol down to it from time to time.

Cause apparently it seems to like that sort of thing.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 06, 2011, 02:42:42 pm**

Time seemed to slow down for the dwarf as she fell, an eerie sense of awareness filled her. Awareness and exhaustion. As she fell she couldn't help but see the insectoid wrestlers crowded around her, three of them, their pale tan chitin reflecting dully the rays of the sun. One of them was already crouched, preparing to spring at her and she made a mental note to bring her shield up to block as her mind continued to spin.

Before she hit she saw Paulus dealing with a small crowd of insectoids of his own. The bug ambushes had become more serious of late, with two or even three groups attacking in concert. Had the bugs been more intelligent Fre might have called them sieges. Paulus seemed to be fending them off well enough but the continual attacks were clearly wearing him down as well. It was hard to swing a hammer when you had to throw off two or three creatures your size first in order to swing properly.

Nearby she heard some buzzing and saw a dragonfly hovering a few dozen feet away, oblivious to the struggle for life and death so nearby.

She saw the insectoid spring, it's blade-like appendage whipping out of it's arm as it descended.

Fre raised her shield to block the blow, only to realize that her body simply failed to respond. Only then did it occur to her that the injuries she had sustained were more serious than she had thought. The insectoid came down upon her with some force and she felt a brief pain in her neck.

Just a scratch then, but she was finding it difficult to breathe with the insect on top of her. Her good arm struggled to rise but another insectoid was pinning it down. She looked over to throw it off only to find that her hammer arm was unencumbered.

A cloud covered the sun briefly at that moment and she suddenly shivered, despite the summer heat.

It was then that she saw a figure, pale and graceful approaching from where Paulus had been fighting. In the figure's hand was held out Fre's old crossbow and slight smile graced her lips, words being spoken too softly for the dwarf to hear. She knew that figure then and what it meant. It seemed unfortunate to her then that she had wasted all those years of her life tormented by her dreams and fears of elves and demons when, in the end, her downfall had been caused by little more than an overgrown insect.

Fre's breath escaped her lips, frosting the air in front of her face as her sight traveled upward through the mist.

It struck her as funny that the sky was that particular shade of blue, but mostly, it seemed strange to her that she found that particular thought amusing in the first place.

And then the mists closed off all sight but the goddess holding the crossbow. Fre stood, suddenly unimpeded, and raising her chin high shook her head at the figure before turning her back and walking away.

Had she looked back she would have noticed that the cloaked figure was no longer even there.

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **September 21, 2011, 04:23:40 pm**

The two dwarves at the base of the ramp stood utterly still and resolute. Both had their eyes closed, though for very different reasons. The one sought solace in memories, the other solace in darkness.

Of course neither was speaking to the other one.

After Fre's death and burial Ragnar had quietly left mining duties and armed herself with an axe, like those she has wielded in the past. Her armor was not extraordinary but solid and steel, decorated in the bones of the clans enemies. That alone would have given most living enemies pause. Or at least any rational enemies.

She had quietly left the safe dark of their caverns for the bright world above. Paulus stood there alone at the base of the ramp when she had arrived and neither spoke as Ragnar took the post of her fallen friend. Had Ragnar known at that moment how little her friend cared for companionship at that time she might have left the Hound to his grieving. Instead the pair stood together, and yet their thoughts were vast distances apart from each other.

One of the guard-bears suddenly reared up to their south and let out a fierce bellow, swatting out at something. Dwarven eyes snapped open only to find weapons already in hand. The pair launched themselves into their foes with such a ferocious abandon and blatant disregard that their opponents had but a moment to be stunned before carapace gave way to hammer and axe. One of the insectoids stood with what appeared to be a guard of honor around it and Paulus launched himself into them and three went down in a tangle of legs, arms, chitinous blades and antennae, falling into the dry pool.

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



Ragnar hefted her axe and considered the bug for a moment before darting out, her axe coming across in front of her in a low scything motion. The insectoid looked to dodge and almost succeeded, except for a vicious twist Ragnar brought to bear that curved the arc of the axe inwards at the last moment, chopping into a wing and severing it. Off balance the bug fought defensively, slashing out almost wildly as the dwarf stalked it down and whittled away at it with brutal efficiency until it lay lifeless at her feet in multiple pieces.

Other insectoids were still visible and the dwarf charged, nearly running over Paulus as he stood, brushing off the dirt and wiping the ichor out of his eyes. The creatures stood little chance after that and minutes later the pair was standing again at the ramp, quiet rapidly enfolding the surroundings again.

Ragnar managed a quick smile and commented at no one in particular "Aye, that's more like it. Like old times dat was."

Long moments passed before a husky voice responded.

"Aye. Almost. ... Almost..."

Ragnar took joy in slaughter recently
Paulus took joy in slaughter recently

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 04, 2011, 05:19:20 pm**

The debate in the Bold Anvil had been going for some time when Led had finally had enough and walked out. The news the traders had brought had been very disconcerting. It hadn't helped that nearly five years had passed since any outside word from the mountainhome had reached the isolated fortress. This of all things wasn't quite what they had expected.

I mean, even Nist Akath had received migrants. Oddbodd spoke of the Waterbore he'd worked on claiming dozens of lives and they'd received migrants. So it seemed strange that here, where perhaps only a dozen dwarves, mostly caravan guards, had died that such trepidation should be experienced.

Migrants were too nervous to make the journey this season.

Led could think of no possible explanation of why migrants would fear this place, short of the hundred foot high entrance in the shape of a skull.

And their soldiers being armored in the bones of the deceased.

And the mountain being a terrifying wilderness full of the undead.

But short of those things it was a virtual paradise. Led ensured that the dwarves had ample food and drink, plenty of work, they had amassed a sizeable treasure hoard for special projects, prospects for military careers and even pet bears and spiders.

What wasn't to like?

Sure, dwarves died from time to time, but where didn't they?

And then as he was walking along the corridor a thought occurred to him that stopped him in his tracks. A thought so perfectly absurd that it fit perfectly with the problem. The nobility of Shieldhelm had been wanting to discourage immigration to prevent their growth and prosperity hadn't they? What better way than to spread tales of the wholesale slaughter of citizens in the fortress. Citizens with perfectly good and true dwarven names.

Citizens whose record existed but had never been seen in light of day.

"Citizens" who were undead and had been named by the dwarves of the fortress and were then dispatched during the cleansing of the Crack.

Like I said, it was utterly ridiculous. And it fit perfectly. Led couldn't help but laugh hysterically as he went to go and tell the Hound his theory and jokingly blame him for all their immigration woes.

((Seriously, that's my theory why I haven't gotten migrants in nearly 15 years. That and our liason dying, but the migrant issue was long before his death.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **October 17, 2011, 04:03:00 pm**

The sound of steel rasping across stone was audible enough for someone to have followed the Hound as he descended into the darkness of the Crack, but few could have matched his intimate knowledge of the place, and fewer still could have traversed it in darkness as he did. They'd been at Geshud Osod for years now, and he'd spent the better part of five years cleansing the place and carving out paths. It felt like home to him, despite the perpetual chill around him. He carried a lantern in one hand though it was not lit. His right hand trailed along the wall, touching it softly as recognition flooded through him after passing this or the other feature, guiding him along. He'd passed Thesaurusaurus at the upper crossway as the dwarf carried a carved skull totem to the grave of Der Kartoffel, a fitting tribute, he supposed.

Finally Paulus arrived at his location and lit the lamp, letting the candlelight play over the ornate coffin, the anvils set at the cardinal directions and the four gold statues reverencing and commemorating the life of his friend, Fre. He sat himself down against the far wall and relaxed in the silence, feeling the vibration of stone around him.



After a time his voice filled the silence like the light of the candle that illuminated the dark of the tomb.

"Wish you were still here Fre. It's just not quite the same without you. Just Ragnar and me left now. So many have now walked your path. Steele I suppose was just the first. Lost count when Dorenemal crumbled, and who knows how many more in the crossing. And for what? I wonder sometimes.

We made a name for ourselves, by our sweat and by our blood. Our name, our clan is now known, and, in certain quarters, respected. So why should I be here... no, never mind. Led is family too. He remembers Dorenemal; he was there. There with me in prison, when I was hammered and broken. Others have followed us, followed me. To Onol Lened, and from it. And now to Geshud Osod. Fortress of bones indeed.

Sometimes I feel like little more than bones myself. Half dead and numbly going through the motions of living.

Perhaps I've just been sober too long. Too many long patrols. Too little interaction. Here I'm just the Hound. Few remember that I used to be a person, a dwarf, a friend. I've got no family left, except for Scott and he's in a different class now with his noble-blooded wife.

The dwarves here I guess are my family. That's why I do what I do. Why I wake up every day.

You were my family...

I'm so tired."

The light lasted much longer before it too succumbed to the dark and the silence that surrounded it.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **December 02, 2011, 05:44:27 pm**

Erith looked carefully at the chunk of stone in her hands from the ruddy glow of the mining lantern behind her. Spitting on it she brought it into the light and began rubbing the stone with her dirty thumb until a faint purple glow was visible. Amethyst.

She tucked the stone into her pouch and looked at the was she was working on once more.

Were there more gemstones buried within?

These exploratory mining trips of hers were almost always productive and the Crack itself made the job easier, since travel along the fissure was straightforward and simple, now that no undead plagued the area.

Thoughts of buried riches and gleaming gems filled her mind as her pick struck stone again and again. The wall crumbled before her quickly, breaking off in useable chunks with surprising rapidity. And then suddenly the wall fell forward instead of back and a black gaping hole reached out to her with it's stale air.

She blinked.

That was unexpected. She stuck her head in and found herself on the side of a massive bottomless pit. Unholy creakings and shufflings filled the space and her skin suddenly crawled with revulsion as she realized that the place was likely filled with further undead. How many more such places filled these mountains.

It is no wonder they were considered evil. Terrifying even, since undead from centuries and millenia past literally flowed out of the cracks in the earth like an ooze.

She turned and made her way quickly back to alert the others and soon the majority of the fortress was on their way to explore her new find. And to assist with the undead.

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



((I've found that cave bear that was drinking all my forbidden alcohol somehow. Quantum mechanics appears alive and well in the game since somehow the bear managed to drink the alcohol through solid rock. I blame some sort of alcohol tunneling phenomenon. Speaking of said bear... I now have it in a cage and will shortly begin setting up the Arena proper and finish the interior of the temple of Mondul.

The cleansing of the pit was quick compared to the crack. Only two clusters of Zombie cave swallowmen were there and all were on shelves instead of flying in the open. Multiple civilians went dashing in to recover bones and whatnot and I had them wrestle several of

the lesser undead to pieces.

Oh, screenie is of post cleansing and is a good Oddbodd update.))

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 09, 2012, 06:21:14 pm**

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I see my end. Our end.

It is inevitable.

My lord assures me of this, as does my lady.

They whisper to me in my dreams now, speaking of death.

When my wife was taken from us I turned to them for comfort and understanding, not knowing. I came here because I believed. I had hope that we could accomplish something significant.

I know now that was folly. I was wrong.

I turned to them for comfort, not understanding that knowing would take more strength than I often feel I have.

When my son, Led, was taken from us I began to understand. The dead have peace. We mourn. But not for the dead. We mourn for the living. We mourn for what could have been. We mourn for what we feel should have been.

These past decades have weighed on me. Given me time to think and reflect that a more substantive life would never have permitted. We, our fortress, is dying.

We were never numerous, we believers in Mondul. When we left it was to find a place where we could learn and grow in peace, away from the torments and misapprehension of those that believed differently. Or so I thought. I see now, that we have come here, not to live.

We have come here to die.

When my son, Mosus, was taken from me today I understood. I turned to my gods with knowledge, and the comfort that understanding brings.

My fellows would have delayed this loss if they could have. I know this. We do not hasten to this next life. But it calls for us whether we wish it or no.

The Hound himself nearly joined the others this past week.

We came here to die. Let me explain. The wall continues to grow, but we needed more granite for the facings and sought it in the granite fields to the north, searching for ore and gems. What we found was an underground river, sealed since time immemorial. The Hound set out to start clearing the undead from the river. I have seen the corpses. Giant toads, lizardmen, Cave crocodiles fifteen feet long. All abominations.

During the fighting he fell in and was nearly killed by a crocodile as he fought in the water with the undead. In the end they were beaten, but he was sorely wounded where the undead beast bit him around the waist. They had to pry his armor out of his wounds with pliers.

And so, he was not there to guard the entrance when the Hunter went after a pack of insectoids that nearly undid her as well. It was the second pack, lying in ambush that took my son from me. When she beckons we must answer the call. One way or another.

My wife was taken from me. My sons.

I cannot but weep for myself and my loss. But I think of the joy of a mother at speaking with her son again. At the joy of brothers, reunited once more.

I long to be with them again.

I know it is coming, and I look forward to it.

I have come here, to die.

Our fortress now numbers but sixteen. No new migrants come. For fear of these lands. For fear of us. We are dwindling. I only hope that we have time to finish our work before our call comes. We are dying. It is inevitable.

I see our end. My end.

And I rejoice in it.

(Written in the hand of Thesaurusaurus)

Spoiler (click to show/hide)



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **ArchAngel** on **November 20, 2012, 08:48:56 pm**

Could you post a link to the mod that you are using? It looks very interesting.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **November 26, 2012, 06:44:24 pm**

You should be able to check the DF Modding section of the forum for Captain Mayday's updated but last I saw this was the most recent version.

http://www.bay12forums.com/smf/index.php?topic=61301.msg1393758#msg1393758 (http://www.bay12forums.com/smf/index.php?topic=61301.msg1393758#msg1393758)

I typed in Legendary lands in the DF Modding forum to get this.

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **ArchAngel** on **December 19, 2012, 08:08:46 pm**

Thanks, trying to embark on one of those goblin forts, like the first group here did. How did you do that?

Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **August 08, 2015, 07:08:31 pm**

((Heh, way late reply, but it was in version 40a? I think, or the previous 31.25 or whatever it was. Check DFFD for Dorenemal posting. Play continues. It is now year 69 in game, 66 years of Geshud Osod. Posting will continue to catch up and finish now that I am close. FPS isn't great when you use the entire embark map, but there are good ways to mitigate FPS loss.))

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Despite years of use the door closed silently leaving the room in abject darkness. No light played within as soft clanking footsteps moved towards the back corner. In the darkness nothing was visible, nothing could have been visible.

Silence followed, then a soft scratching.

Nothing.

Another soft scratching and then a flare of incandescence as the match took and the candle in a small stone dish was lit.

A warm light played over the room. It was all in order, but a thick layer of dust covered the table and chair, and the few stacks of papers. The stone chest opened silently and a book was removed. The Hound shook a rag off and wiped away the dust from a section of the table. To clean it was pointless. All the planning had already been done, only the work was left.

And there were other tables at which he could eat.

He cracked the book and read his last entry, years ago. It brought some pain to him, but that had dulled over the years. Fre would not be coming back, and work here continued.

He drew again a rough map of the area into his journal, taking meticulous care to include the new features found since the last addition.

Spoiler (click to show/hide)



And then he slowly began writing.

It has been some time since I take quill to parchment to record the happenings here. I feel we have been so busy with work and survival that on occasion a year will pass with little or no change.

But one of my projects has finally reached completion.

The Crack, accursed no longer, now is easily traversable. The High road is complete! It runs the length and breadth of the crack, from our lower boundary to the upper north-west corner. The Temple of Mondul is the center point and there is a small eating hall and food storage there.

Spoiler (click to show/hide)



The southern portion leads to a small living area. A barracks with beds, workshops and kitchen, dining hall and more storage for the

workers on the wall. And a cavernous storage room for blocks to be held until ready for work in that region.

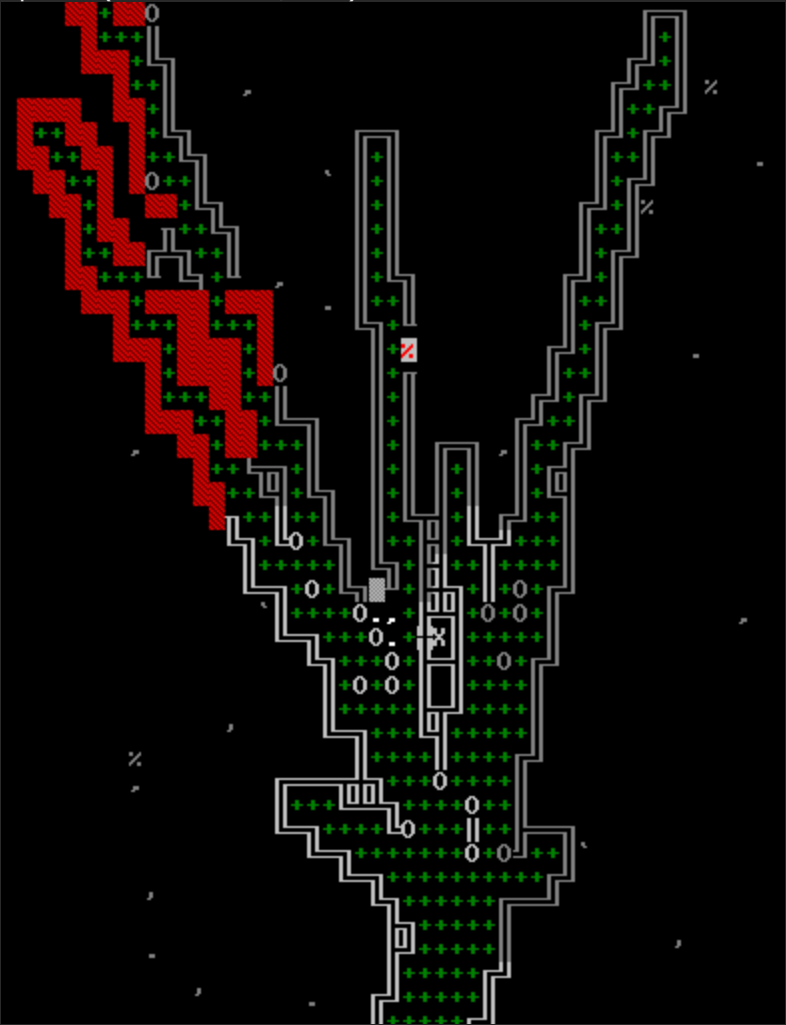
Spoiler (click to show/hide)



With an area our size I have taken steps logistically to reduce travel time by having the rocks mined, and chiseled at the dig site. They are then stored in bins there before being moved to the final storage near where wall construction is occurring at the time. Glacies has taken over wall construction and that has been progressing as well.

The north end of the High road features a similar situation, but with only workshops. That is where the granite is located so there are significant diggings in the depths below the High road. The road itself leads up into the Wall proper via a single stair.

Spoiler (click to show/hide)



The High road is a significant improvement over the low road, though I do still take the lower path from time to time, if only to remember. The green glass flooring of the High road is smooth, and always cool to the touch. The walls along it have all been smoothed, thanks to Boink. And enclosures where there were once undead are now engraved and filled with decorative stautes and long-burning oil lamps. The veins of ore that were found have been similarly emptied and the mineral rich walls are to be engraved and the windy passageways of the earth veins will be filled with statue gardens at some future point.

It is truly a thing of beauty. A marvel to traverse. Nearly six thousand green glass blocks went into it's make. 5969 to be exact. I've promised Boink free reign of any of our supplies to do with as she wishes. Oddbodd too, for all their work in the glass furnaces.

And yet, for all it's beauty I do not feel satisfied. It may last a thousand years and yet I feel like my work here is unfinished. The wall is Glacies' calling, and she is serving well, though she now walks with a limp and her hands shake from time to time. Her speech is at times different as well, both in pattern and pronunciation. It's all 'ere now. and Wot wot? I fear the weather has taken a toll on her health.

Ragnar and I have been running routine patrols, and we often come across issues. The Avarii still act strange and aggressive towards us. The bugs still hunt us. The goblins ... to be fair, I have not seen them in a decade. We've had no sieges at all of late. Almost surprisingly. It's almost as if there were a hush. An expectancy in the air. And now I write that I feel my anxiety returning that there remains things left undone here.

Perhaps I should begin to write more often.

Even as I write that I suspect I shall not. Heh. Too much to be done.

Paulus closed the book and placed it back in the stone chest. Glancing at his desk he picked up a brass orb, of curious workmanship.

The smell of lingering flame and dust filled his nostrils as darkness rapidly swallowed everything around him and he went to lie down to sleep.

The two dwarves sat in the small, but tidy office, one with the weary smile of victory, the other the burdened slump of defeat. The Head Mason and the Scribe were discussing the work on the wall, but only the Mason looked happy. For the scribe it was simply more work, and ever since the Zombie Giant eagle had knocked Glacies off the wall his mannerisms had changed and his affectations bothered Thesaurusaurus. Considerably.

At least he had brought good news. Even for him.

"Poppycock, man. I tell you. Rubbish to that. We've accomplished a sight more than just building some flimsy border around a few hovels." Glacies said this while sitting, or at least appearing to be sitting upright, twisting his long mustache and beard.

"We've now finished the foundations of this entire structure. The footings are secure, the sheathing, in and out are solid bedrock. Granite, man!"

A scowl flitted across the Scribe's face. "Yes, I'm sure. I know exactly what you've put out there, but it has taken you the better part of seventy years! And stop calling me man. I'm a dwarf!"

Pfeh, you've not seen the wall. Us eight have worked tirelessly for these decades to do this. Worked in snow, sleet, rain, shine." He shuddered slightly. " Ugh, shine so bright it'll give you a bloody headache even with your eyes closed. Especially in winter comin' off the snow. We've seen sieges come and go, worked and walked fifty feet above Avar, goblins, the dead abominations, you name it."

"That may be but I have recorded every stone you have placed. For every stone you eight work I have to work as well to record it. So don't get all uppity on me."

Glacies quieted down somewhat, thinking. Drinking his mug of water. The alcohol had run out a few decades after Fre had passed. And nobody had taken time to brew more, nor to farm the plants needed. They rarely traded anymore, perhaps once every 7 years or so, and anything they got simply didn't last until the next trading.

"You ken all that we've built?" was Glacies query after the silence had faded into staleness.

"Every stone is recorded." Thesaurusaurus assured him. "Every one. By my estimate the Hounds' High road took five thousand nine hundred and sixty nine green glass blocks for example. That one is simple. Your wall is not so straight forward. I've seen the drawings, seventy feet thick it says, though corridors run through it in so many places it is like a warren. So sixty in most, and only in the valley is it any more than thirty feet tall yet."

"Tut, it will rise. Rise it shall." Glacies emphasized.

The scribe took out a piece of slate and a chalk, checked his books and scrawled out some numbers for the High Mason.

Spoiler (click to show/hide)

The screenshot displays the Dwarf Fortress game interface, specifically the inventory and resource management screen. The top bar shows 'FPS: 17' and 'The Wealth of Geshud Osod'. The main area is divided into two panels, each listing various resources and their quantities. The left panel lists resources like thread, logs, stones, rough gems, bars, cut gems, large gems, coins, blocks, small tame animals, small live animals, pipe section, hatch covers, grates, querns, millstones, windows, animal traps, and chains. The right panel lists resources like Granite blocks, Diorite blocks, Gabbro blocks, Rhyolite blocks, Andesite blocks, Felsite blocks, Obsidian blocks, Gneiss blocks, Marble blocks, Garnierite blocks, Native gold blocks, Malachite blocks, Native platinum blocks, Cobaltite blocks, Tetrahedrite blocks, Graphite blocks, Kimberlite blocks, Realgar blocks, and Ilmenite blocks. Each resource has a quantity and a value. The bottom of each panel shows a legend: 'm: Melt', 'f: Forbid', 'd: Dump', 'h: Hide'. The interface is in a monospaced font, typical of Dwarf Fortress.

Resource	Quantity	Value	Notes
thread	60	12699	
logs	173	409	
stones	849	2641	
rough gems	306	11	
bars	7208	84	
cut gems	478	9	
large gems	12	9	
coins	None		
blocks	206	68332	
small tame animals	9		
small live animals	None		
pipe section	1	2	
hatch covers	None	4	
grates	20	8	
querns	None		
millstones	None		
windows	None		
animal traps	None		
chains	10	64	

Resource	Quantity	Value	Notes
Granite blocks	[17241]		F
Diorite blocks	[14391]		F
Gabbro blocks	[4]		
Rhyolite blocks	[1283]		F
Andesite blocks	[6698]		F
Felsite blocks	[3112]		F
Obsidian blocks	[5188]		F
Gneiss blocks	[638]		
Marble blocks	[4]		
Garnierite blocks	[5]		F
Native gold blocks	[5]		
Malachite blocks	[4]		
Native platinum blocks	[16]		F
Cobaltite blocks	[162]		
Tetrahedrite blocks	[2]		
Graphite blocks	[2]		
Kimberlite blocks	[7]		
Realgar blocks	[7]		F
Ilmenite blocks	[9]		F

Legend: m: Melt, f: Forbid, d: Dump, h: Hide

"Near as I can tell here's what you've put into it. Never mind some of the smaller numbers. The specialty blocks were not used in the wall. Just over seventeen thousand blocks of granite for the sheathing. And figuring in thickness and passages, at least twice that in filler stone, obviously mostly diorite, but others as well. See here."

Both were silent for a moment, but Glacies couldn't help but smile. "Indeed, a great work. At this rate we'll be done in a mere thirty years."

Thesaurusaurus pursed his lips and shook his head slightly.

"Bugger it all man, must you be so contrary?"

The scribe nearly lost it at being called man and bug in the same sentence but simply shuffled his work together and sniffed. "More like eighty. At this rate you only manage to place just over two blocks a day. Given the current rate of construction and the plans intended it should take you roughly that much more once the wall reaches even keel across and you have to build more on each level. Now good day. I've work to do. I need to re-catalog the quarry stones before they're worked and I need to finish the inventory and years end report."

Glacies ran a hand through his hair, thinking. He stood and walked out but popped his head back in a second later. "At least you don't have to worry about more new inventory wandering in though, eh, mate? Now's the gates are in, nothing gets in or out."

The scribe simply shook his head. It did make things easier. Generally. But a sudden thought made him fearful. Too many things had been trying to get in for so long. What would be trying to get out?

Spoiler (click to show/hide)

The screenshot displays the Dwarf Fortress interface, divided into two main sections: a top status bar and a bottom map view.

Top Status Bar

FPS: 100 Geshud Osod, "The Fortress of Bones" 15th Limestone, 74, Early Autumn

Animals	Kitchen	Stone	Stocks	Justice
Created Wealth: 6579428*				
Weapons: 137484*				
Armor and Garb: 557067*				
Furniture: 928946*				
Other Objects: 2053190*				
Architecture: 2051652*				
Displayed: 799199*				
Held/Worn: 51890*				
Imported Wealth: 1188788*				
Exported Wealth: 596016*				
Food Stores: 2314				
Meat 156	Seeds 962			
Fish None	Drink None			
Plant None	Other 1196			
Population: 16				
Miners ② 2				
Woodworkers ① 1				
Stoneworkers ⑨ 9				
Rangers ③ None				
Metalsmiths ① 1				
Jewelers ③ None				
Craftsdwarves ① 1				
Nobles/Admins ③ None				
Peasants ③ None				
Children ③ None				
Fishery Workers ③ None				
Farmers ③ None				
Engineers ③ None				
Trained Animals A None				
Other Animals A 47				
Champions ⑧ 1				
Axedwarves ③ None				
Axe Lords ④ None				
Swordsdwarves ③ None				
Swordmasters ③ None				
Macedwarves ③ None				
Mace Lords ③ None				
Hammerdwarves ③ None				
Hammer Lords ③ None				
Speardwarves ③ None				
Spearmasters ③ None				
Marksdwarves ③ None				
Elite Mrksdwrvs ③ None				
Wrestlers ③ None				
Elite Wrestlers ⑧ 1				
Recruits ⑧ None				

Bottom Map View

The map view shows a top-down perspective of the fortress. The left side features a large body of water (blue) with a small island containing a building (white square). The right side shows a land area (green/brown) with various structures, including a large building (white square) and several smaller buildings (yellow squares). The map is bordered by a black frame, and the top edge shows a series of white dots representing the horizon or sky.

Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)

by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **June 07, 2016, 07:40:18 pm**

Ragnar removed her helm and placed the steel shell next to her carefully as she kneeled in front of the solid granite block in front of her. Ordinarily she would have been sweating in the sweltering heat but she barely felt it, nervousness and excitement both welling up inside her at the same time.

Oddbodd had been the one to strike out in this area of the mountains. Inspired, or so he said, by the idea of recreating a lesser version of his home city. The entrance to the section of their mines consisted of a pair of brass doors, flanked by brass statues. Walking up several levels above the mines themselves brought you to a large cleared out area, where the miners and masons had been working making blocks for nearly the past decade. It had cleared an immense caldera, albeit dwarf made, around the Magma tube that had been found. After clearing the rock and ensuring a vent for the flow the magma had been released, creating a sizeable lake around which Oddbodd had been insistent he set up the trappings of dwarven living. He himself had a large room here, with other rooms in progress. Magma furnaces and forges had also been set up, storage space, and even a dining hall overlooking the superheated rock was in progress.

Ragnar had only requested a small room, tucked above near the top of the vent tube, and it was in that room that she now knelt. Exceptional Brass statues filled a small alcove but the large stone, made of the bones of the earth lay squat and square in the center of the room.

Ragnar had carved the symbol of Asen Rabdatan Zes, a volcano surrounded by a circle into the surface of the granite and filled it using a crude obsidian crucible with magma from the lake. It seemed an appropriate gesture.

In her mind she felt drawn back through her life and her experiences as she meditated. Friends come and gone, family too. Fortresses even. Mountainsides crumbled into the sea.

And then before her stood again a flaming figure calling her name.

"Ragnar, I have accepted your sacrifice and your changed heart. As you have been born again with water and fire let you now be rebirthed. Stand and be recognized as my Champion!"

She stood and he stretched forth to take her hand in his. A searing pain enveloped her arm but she did not flinch. Not even when she smelled the particular odor of burning hair and singed flesh. She would be strong.

As he withdrew his hand again the pain abruptly ceased and she looked down at her hand, now branded with Asen's mark.

"Your work has now only just begun. Your path lies before you. I only need you to open your eyes and see the way before you."

As Ragnars vision cleared once more she thought she could detect just the faintest hint of burned hair in the air and she quickly ripped off her gauntlet, just to confirm if it was vision or reality. It was apparently both, as there, clearly visible on the back of her hand was the scar tissue of a burn mark with a circle, surrounding a volcano.

She stood again, replacing her gauntlet and fitting her helm to her head once more.

The vision, it had said something about a path.

What path?

She was not sure. There had only been one way in here. Was the path figurative or literal?

It was then that she opened her eyes. It was only then that she saw the works of art decorating the temple. Art carved by Oddbodd himself, and suddenly she felt fear.

"Aww, hell." was all that escaped her lips as she turned and sprinted to find Paulus.

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



Title: **Re: Geshud Osod, the Fortress of Bones (Community/Story in Legendary Lands)**
Post by: **Paulus Fahlstrom** on **February 18, 2017, 12:52:47 am**

"Hell indeed." Led's voice was quiet, but carried well in the small enclosed space before them all.

"This is what we fight here. The very powers of Hell itself. If we ever want to stay the undead here as Mondul has commanded then this is what we must face."

The pause in his speech carried volumes, but nothing really needed to be said. They knew the dangers, knew what Could happen, just as surely as they heard the heavy iron floodgate clang shut behind them minutes before.

A general call to arms had been made as soon as the news was carried. All assembled that were able. Two of the others had just finished a patrol and were sleeping, exhausted, leaving Boink to seal them in for their fate. A complex knock system and call response was set up to ensure when, IF, it would be safe to open the doors.

If not, Boink had been given instruction to cave in the entrance to Oddbodd's domain here. All knew what was at stake.

"I thank you all, and may our goddess watch over us. I cannot think of any with whom I would rather die."

"Dear, if you would, clear the stones and then gear up behind us."

Sarah nodded, and gave Led's hand a squeeze before depositing her protections behind the wall of living steel and bone that were the dwarves of the Wall of Zealots.

In the eerie silence breathing could be heard, and the faint utterings of prayers to Mondul. Then the barricade crumbled.

All Hell did not break loose at that time. But to those trapped in the room with it, they could feel it ... expand into their space. Their skin suddenly felt, taut, as if the pressure in the room suddenly changed. The screams of tormented souls hit them first. Numbing their ears, stealing their senses.

It was seconds later, before they had re-oriented that the first wave hit them, pouring from the fissure in the rock before them. To their eyes, they looked like men, male and female. Their skin was pale, their hair long and matted, pale yellow, tan or red. But their was an unnaturalness to their motion, as if they were not quite accustomed to those bodies.

[Spoiler](#) (click to show/hide)



The sudden thuds of flesh on metal and warcries of dwarf and demon alike filled the air. The demons charged without hesitation and fear, throwing themselves upon the dwarves in reckless abandon. Their speed and strength was considerable and a pair of demons leaped into the cluster of dwarves, knocking several to the ground.

Led struck out at one of them with his spear, impaling a leg from behind, driving it's attention toward him. The monster bled, however. It could be killed. Soon the dwarves changed tactics, working as a group to bring down the ones that made it through the front ranks, while a few dwarves maintained the front line. Glacies, held the front, along with several of her Masons, Erith, Ascubis, Asmel and Draconius. Ragnar and the Hound were there as well, holding the line against the incoming waves.

Maintaining a line only worked so well in the ensuing chaos. The demons would leap from the fissure, or tackle dwarves, down in a tangle of limbs and steel. The demons were incredibly strong, treating steel like a normal dwarf would treat leather.

It was after a large wave, that nearly swamped the dwarves that Erith and Ascubis rallied, carving their way to the fissue and following up it into the darkness.

The struggle among the remaining combatants was so fierce that no one noticed their surge, nor a few minutes later when demons began pouring through the fissure again.

Led was fighting his own demons now, a pair that even he was hard pressed to keep back. Sarah, down and wrestling with a bear of a

man nearby. Thesaurusaurus and Reg, beating a demon into paste. Ragnar held her post still near the fissure, the ground slick beneath her with blood. The Hound too remained resolute, broken bodies lying against walls nearby.

Though Lor was not the first, he was first seen die. A demon had sprung upon him and none were near to help. A demon had jumped at him, tackling him then headbutted him into unconsciousness. It had been mercifully short after that, but not clean. The demon had taken an axe to a leg shortly thereafter by Kolok, who grimly pushed through his bouts of weakness. Kolok did not get the kill, but had incapacitated it long enough to get the job done.

To everyone's surprise Erith plunged back down the fissure at that point, knocked back by another wave that crashed upon the defenders.

The scribe fell, strangled from behind. Erith too succumbed under the tide of frenzied bezerkers.

Led had moved to help the others, glancing over at Sarah, who was still struggling with her single attacker, one of the dwarfess' arms bent askew.

((Post in progress. Battles are slow))